

The Nation

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THE TRUE LEGISLATORS

Books were in the news last week. Jim Wright's book, which was under scrutiny by the House Ethics Committee, is a compilation of the sayings of Speaker Jim. It was peddled in bulk to a select audience of special interest groups, providing Wright with undeclared contributions. As though nature abhors a bipartisan vacuum, Wright's chief gadfly, blow-dried minority leader Newt Gingrich, admitted that a nonbook he had written was backed by a group of twenty-one fat cats to the tune of \$5,000 apiece.

Reading another prominent and familiar story of chicanery on high, we were reminded of Ezra Pound's dictum, "Literature is news that stays news." The announcement that a Federal grand jury had indicted the Northrup Corporation for falsifying tests on crucial parts in their cruise missiles and Harrier jets evoked memories of Arthur Miller's 1947 play *All My Sons*, which centers on a World War II manufacturer who knowingly sold faulty components, causing deaths in combat.

News of a different sort was made by the publication of the fiftieth anniversary edition of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. The novel, which originally moved the emotions with its depiction of the hard lives of Okies who migrated to California during the Depression, is now of course a quaint antique. In our more enlightened age, migrant workers are happy, well fed and content. There are no homeless families in our cities and on our highways.

Prophets like Miller and Steinbeck tell timeless truths about greed and callousness, and they articulate the conscience of the people. In that sense they are, as Shelley said, the unacknowledged legislators. Instead of writing bad books, Wright and Gingrich should have been reading some good ones—and writing laws to help people instead of saving bankers and defense contractors.

SOUTH AFRICA SETS A TRAP

Alexander
Cockburn

JAILING MOTHERS Susan LaCroix

WEST GERMANY: COALITION OR POLARIZATION?

Norman
Birnbaum
Timothy W.
Ryback

CHAINED PUBLISHERS Chris Goodrich

THE LANGUAGE OF AIDS Gregory Kolovakos

THE LEGACY OF 1917

NEW DAYS THAT SHAKE THE WORLD

DANIEL SINGER

With Boris Yeltsin triumphantly defying the establishment in Moscow, Lech Walesa guiding the Polish opposition into Parliament and Imre Pozsgay, a member of the Hungarian Politburo, arguing in Budapest that his party should drop its "dogmatic wing" and strike an alliance with the country's social democrats, it can be said that the era of Communist Party rule by divine right is over in Eastern Europe. Or, to switch to an economic metaphor, that a system of absolute monopoly is being replaced by one of imperfect competition.

The three countries setting the pace on this journey toward democracy are not following exactly the same road or advancing at quite the same speed. In the Soviet Union the principle of one-party rule is not to be questioned for the time being; in Poland the ruling party hopes to preserve power by integrating the opposition into the system; in Hungary the regime promises free elections, complete with genuine opposition parties, and expects to stay on top at the head of a coalition. We may leave to the end of the story the crucial question about the shape of the "socialist parliamentary democracy" toward which all three countries claim to be moving, and begin by examining the Soviet experience. For however important the peripheral advances may be, they will remain vulnerable as long as democracy is not consolidated at the center.

Last year, while reviving the famous slogan "All Power to the Soviets," Mikhail Gorbachev took all sorts of precautions (Continued on Page 591)



EXCHANGE.

The following commentaries continue the exchange over Darrell Yates Rist's February 13 article, "AIDS as Apocalypse: The Deadly Costs of an Obsession." Rist's reply will appear in a forthcoming issue.

MARK GEVISSER

Righteous indignation always walks a thin line between the inspirational and the rant. If Jesse Jackson and Harvey Milk fly on the one side, then to me Darrell Yates Rist tumbles down down down on the other. Rist's politics are as challenging as Milk's, his rhetoric as wrought as Jackson's, but what his writing lacks is the generosity that effective cultural critics *must* have—no matter how acerbic their commentary—if they are to be heard by their constituencies.

The man comes across as mean-spirited beyond belief. In this "Deadly Costs of an Obsession" debate he has unflaggingly insulted the very people whom he desires to influence. From "cabals of white lesbian . . . functionaries of the men" to images of panic-mongering trendy doomsayers in the service of a gay ayatollah, it is Rist's rhetoric that teeters dangerously in the direction of obsession and hysteria. His stance is, in fact, the exact opposite of the eggheaded, scientific rationalism of organizations such as ACT UP and Gay Men's Health Crisis. AIDS activists, like all grass-roots activists, do undoubtedly have a tendency to rabble-rouse, but the power of AIDS activism—its success in mobilizing gays and lesbians across the country—is that it backs up each hotheaded outcry with a cold, sobering fact.

As Rist blazes a path through the efforts of men and women who have given their lives to the fight against this epidemic, he allows one figure to rise tall and untainted from the slag heap of his rage: the noble gay and lesbian youth. As one who was very recently a gay and lesbian youth (I am in my early 20s), I say, Thanks but no thanks. I thank Rist for his concern, but I protest his lack of understanding of me and those a few years younger than me. I, like my younger brothers and sisters, am coming out in the age of AIDS. For better or for worse, AIDS is part of my sexual identity. It is something I had to consider very seriously when I made the decision to be out in the world. And here's the crux: I didn't take it seriously because *I* was obsessed with death but rather because homophobic society was obsessed with my death. Homosexuality and AIDS are these days inextricable, not because we gay people want them to be but because that's how this society has chosen to view us.

A cursory glance through the educational materials of the Hetrick-Martin Institute proves that this is something the organization understands. If you're going to talk to kids about homosexuality, you have to talk

to them about AIDS; if you don't bring it up, you can bet that they will. The people who work with Hetrick-Martin see themselves both as gay educators and as AIDS educators. One of them, Ann Northrop, was even an ACT UP facilitator last year. Unlike Rist, Northrop and her colleagues are savvy enough to know that if you're going to fight AIDS you have to fight homophobia, and vice versa.

Another figure Rist holds up as a counter to the rasping gay elder "suspended above the pork roast" is the homeless gay man with AIDS on the streets of San Francisco's Tenderloin district. What does Rist think that homeless gay man wants? Education for gay youth? The right to marry his lover? If he wants and needs anything, it's health care; it's the end to discrimination against people with AIDS; it's medical treatment; it's anything that might cure his illness or alleviate his symptoms. He needs the AIDS movement more than any fat cat in the Castro does, because he doesn't *have* a private physician to help him enter an experimental drug trial; he doesn't *have* the funds to smuggle in unapproved drugs from Mexico or Japan.

Rist has a number of significant points to make, the most important one being that the fight against AIDS is not our only struggle. This argument alone might not have made waves, but it would have been of great service to his community. He chose, instead, to inflame, to grab a brief moment of infamy by descending into the pits of internecine money-grubbing squabble-mongering. Even if one claims (perhaps correctly) that too much money has gone to the G.M.H.C. and not enough to Hetrick-Martin or to the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, there is no need to construct an argument for one by attempting the obliteration of the other, particularly when both serve vital, life-affirming functions. It's worse than bad manners—it's bad politics.

Mark Gevisser writes regularly for The Nation on gay issues and AIDS, as well as on South African culture.

TIMOTHY J. SWEENEY

Darrell Yates Rist raises the important issue of balance between AIDS and other gay and lesbian concerns. However, by characterizing the agenda of AIDS activists as simply "the right not to die," Rist caricatures and insults a movement that has done much to advance the goal of a full, dignified human life on earth for every gay man and lesbian.

At Gay Men's Health Crisis—an organization that puts the word "gay" in people's mouths every day—we do not "dance to the tune of bigots." We'd have accomplished nothing—nothing—if that were the case.

Did Rist miss last year's fight around the Helms amendment? Senator Jesse Helms took the Senate floor to say that G.M.H.C.'s explicit Safer Sex Comix (comics addressed directly to gay men) made him "want to throw up." Did we pull them? No. As a result a \$700,000 Federal research contract was not renewed—all this over comics that were produced privately for \$6,000. Along with the A.C.L.U., we are challenging Helms in court and we successfully presented an alternative, less offensive amendment in the next Congress.

What such stances cost us in terms of funding and political support we cannot assess. We recognize, as Rist does not, that all of our work is part of the fight against homophobic ignorance and prejudice—in hospitals, in workplaces, in libraries, at Boy Scout meetings, at street fairs, at the many places we go.

Nor do we celebrate death. All our work—support services, education, advocacy—promotes gay people (and all oppressed groups devastated by AIDS) taking control of their lives. We emphasize civil liberties, safe sexuality, joy, empowerment, friendship, coalition, partnership, family: a working definition of liberation.

To advance a gay and lesbian agenda it is necessary to build coalitions, to help other communities see the connection between our struggle and theirs. I believe that more functional coalitions have been built around AIDS issues than around almost any issue in our community's history. G.M.H.C., ACT UP and other AIDS organizations participate in a number of city, state and national coalitions, made up of women's groups, drug prevention and treatment groups, youth groups, reproductive health groups, black groups, Latino groups and others; these coalitions can point to many policy, legislative and funding successes that have made life better for all of us. The issues we've addressed together include definitions of family, access to health care, sex education and disability rights. We have found common cause and understand our various struggles—against racism, sexism, classism, homophobia—to be connected and to be well served by our work together. A few examples of coalition successes are New York State's model confidentiality bill, and the increase in overall AIDS funding by New York City and New York State.

Rist assumes that AIDS organizations are robbing other gay groups of much-needed funds. He doesn't even entertain the notion that overall funding for gay organizations has risen. The organizing of the gay community around AIDS has led to greater sophistication and funding for all gay groups, most of which have grown dramatically since 1981. In fact, nearly 70 percent of

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EDITORIALS.

A Clear Majority

Constitutional law is statecraft. It reflects how we live and shapes how we ought to live. It is distinguished from ordinary politics not so much by an indifference to public opinion—though that is necessary at times—but by a search for the deeper, more permanent strains of that opinion. The Supreme Court has thus never been unmindful of what the American people believe and want from their Constitution. Nor should it be, for

that would be rule by Platonic guardians claiming access to abstract truth found in something called “the law.”

The march by hundreds of thousands of Americans in Washington on April 9 should therefore be taken into account as an expression of what these dedicated pilgrims think their Constitution is all about. The huge assembly should also be seen as an unambiguous statement of the majority view in this country: A woman should have the right to decide whether or not to have an abortion. All came out of a deep conviction, and that is perhaps the single most important fact, despite media-fueled impressions that “right

to lifers" have cornered the passion on this issue. In truth, upward of 70 percent of Americans are pro-choice.

If the Court overturns *Roe v. Wade* or upholds Missouri's heavy burdens on the right to choose, the efforts of anti-choice groups will be redoubled to get states and municipalities to enact strictures similar to Missouri's. The Court would thereby unleash a never-ending chain reaction of bitter state and local political battles, draining time and energy from other issues that our society must face.

The abortion issue can only be put to at least temporary rest if the Court rules unequivocally that a woman's right to decide what will happen to her body is guaranteed by the Constitution, and that this right may not be substantially burdened. As the march showed, millions of people oppose efforts to impose heavy obstacles on the freedom of choice and, if defeated, will return to the issue again and again.

Nor is *The Nation* immune to the constructive passion symbolized by the march. Christopher Hitchens's "Minority Report" last week opposing abortion except in cases of rape and incest was truly a minority report. It incited a two-hour, in-house staff seminar and critique, which in turn resulted in a "Majority Report" that will appear in our letters section soon. Hitchens and our other columnists will doubtless continue—are in fact encouraged—to dissent from majority opinion, even when it is ours.

Lethal Aid

Back in 1980 two Salvadorans visited *The Nation's* offices and detailed the ways in which "nonlethal" aid supplied by the Carter Administration was put to murderous use in their country. Six years later, in its judgment against the United States, the World Court condemned "humanitarian assistance" to the *contras* as an instrument of aggression: its name a slander against "the purposes hallowed in the practice of the Red Cross," its distribution to fighters rather than to needy civilians a violation of international law. In the period between and ever since, each country in Central America has felt the devious and distorting hand of U.S. intervention; still, liberals in this country gaze hopefully through the wreckage and trust that things will be different under a "new" Administration. Thus the support in Washington for the bipartisan accord to renew "nonlethal" aid to the *contras*, which as of this writing stands ready to pass both houses of Congress. Thus too the sentiments of resigned assent expressed in *The Nation's* April 17 editorial on the subject.

But U.S. policy is not fundamentally dependent on the peculiarities of its chief exponents. From Carter to Reagan to Bush there is a bumpy though unbroken line, a vicious consistency by which the immiseration of Central America continues, any hope of boldly pursuing an independent course is crushed, and people die. In Nicaragua they die so long as the aid flows. Some 1,500 *contras* still roam the country. Between January 1988 and February 1989, a period when only "nonlethal" aid was appropriated, the *contras* killed 147 civilians, wounded 150 and kidnapped 281. And

so long as the aid flows and the illegal U.S. embargo holds, Nicaraguan society slowly strangles, unable to demobilize, to reconstruct, to loosen internal controls. This, more than fantasies of military victory, has always been the object of *contra* aid. Last year a Defense Department official told the *Los Angeles Times*, "2,000 hard-core guys could keep some pressure on the Nicaraguan government, force them to use their economic resources for the military and prevent them from solving their economic problems."

What the accord engineered by James Baker has done is to establish a consensus behind one of the major ideological projects of the Reagan era. Bipartisanship here is no empty ritual but a profoundly undemocratic deal. Debate is foreclosed or removed to the caucus room. The war on Nicaragua becomes less visible and more sustainable. The legislation about to be voted on covers only the question of aid—\$4.5 million a month for eleven months—leaving specifics of how that aid will be monitored, under what conditions and for what political purposes to a series of unbinding side agreements, some yet unwritten and at least one of them classified. For the solidarity movement, which has effectively used the public forum and the grass-roots lobby, this insider trade presents a major obstacle both to influencing official actions and stoking the larger public argument.

Finally, in contradicting the intentions of the Central American presidents as expressed in February, Bush and his bipartisans are following a pattern set by the United States in 1987 after the Esquipulas II accord and faithfully repeated last year in response to the Sapoá cease-fire agreement. In each case the Central American presidents either denounced *contra* aid or sought to place unequivocal restrictions on it. In each case the United States ignored them while asserting complete compliance. Like Reagan, Bush calls this a peace process. The Democrats who now agree with him should be made to pay. JOANN WYPIJEWSKI

Political Poems

Occasionally, readers ask why *The Nation* does not publish more poetry that is, like its reporting, overtly political. The answer is that the magazine does so when distinguished political poems come to it. Indeed, *The Nation* has presented poems by Pablo Neruda, translated by Alastair Reid; Ernesto Cardenal, translated by Donald D. Walsh; W.S. Merwin; Sharon Olds; and W.B. Yeats, as well as fine pieces by lesser known writers.

While we continue to look for poets of high caliber, years of reading political poems have taught us that the genre is especially difficult. This may be because our aesthetic criteria for good poetry—music, precision of imagery, language, originality—are determined by unique individual utterances, while political poetry is often more impersonal. To excel at the form requires a particular technical skill: For Neruda, it was his use of an "impure diction" that enabled him to embrace the world while he railed at its brutality; for Merwin, it is an authoritative use of the deep image, the visionary experience, to convey injustice.

How often good poems address major topical issues is difficult to assess because they vary in their directness. Many poets are explicitly political, as when Thomas Hardy writes of the Titanic in "The Convergence of the Twain." Wordsworth, in "The Prelude," writes of the new liberty of his age, and in other poems salutes what is common and good in ordinary people. More oblique references are found in, for example, Marianne Moore's "The Paper Nautilus," which is ostensibly about a sea animal but which pursues a subtle dialectic about human conflict, or in "Grave-Rubbing in a New England Cemetery," a poem dealing with American tradition, by Peter Schmitt, a recent *Discovery/Nation* prize winner.

American poetry has been affected by earlier trends, such as Romanticism, that are imbued with public concern. Harold Bloom writes in "Prometheus Rising" that political forces exerted an enormous influence on the English Romantics and that "the central desire of Blake and Wordsworth, and of Keats and Shelley, was to find a final good in human existence itself." Again, the question of how fully and how well our poets absorb such traditions is paramount.

In this issue of the magazine, poems by J.D. McClatchy and James Merrill (page 601) are of the highest artistic excellence and, at the same time, are concerned with actual historical issues. They differ notably in the sense that the speaker in Merrill's poem is a child who innocently stumbles upon truths adults try to conceal from him. In McClatchy's piece the speaker is an adult thinking of modern Ireland while contemplating Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, an epic that tries to justify an empire's expansion. Both poems speak to the consciousness of our time. GRACE SCHULMAN

Bailout Ripoff

Many of us yawn when banking issues come up. We snoozed as the wall separating thrifts and commercial banks was torn down, and we dozed as regulation of the financial industry was stripped to the bare bones by the Reagan Administration. The press finds banking issues so boring that the savings and loan crisis rarely surfaced in the long presidential campaign, not even in the debates held in Texas, the S&L disaster area.

But the issue can no longer be avoided. Over the next few months, our elected representatives will have to stand up and be counted on President Bush's plan to soak taxpayers \$126 billion over ten years to bail out the S&L industry. We at the Financial Democracy Campaign—a national coalition of unions and civil rights, church and citizens' groups—think the proposal is a ripoff and is grossly inadequate by bailout standards.

When New York City (in the mid-1970s) and the Chrysler Corporation (1979) teetered on the verge of bankruptcy, all parties involved sat down at the table to work out a rescue. All contributed and made sacrifices, as all would benefit if resuscitation efforts succeeded. As the S&L bailout is being structured, the taxpayers have no seat at the table, though each will face a bill of up to \$1,000. And the financial in-

dustry that benefited from high interest rates and the practices that brought the thrifts to their knees is nowhere to be seen. As for bringing back some of the plunder and putting it on the table: The Administration can't even promise that the meager \$50 million it has asked for to prosecute those who mismanaged, those who misinvested and those who advised the thrifts will be recovered in reclaimed assets.

In other bailouts all elements of cost were considered, even labor contracts in place for years. But in this bailout, the bargain-basement deals that the government regulators cut with S&Ls and wealthy investors are not being reopened. The Treasury has actually made money from rescues in the past. But no one expects a return on the public money poured into the thrifts. While depositors have to be protected, the institutions that gambled with money that was not theirs do not. There is a difference between standing behind deposit insurance and bailing out thrifts.

If there is a reason to bail out the S&Ls, it is that the work those institutions were set up to do is not yet done, and there is no one else to do it. That work is to provide Americans of modest income with affordable mortgages. The bailout can and must get S&Ls back to their original mission. First, selling off valuable real estate at fire-sale prices should be stopped. Residential property should be made available to local housing agencies and nonprofit organizations to meet urgent housing needs nationwide. Second, a portion of the proceeds from land and commercial property sales should be put into a trust earmarked for affordable housing. Third, special arrangements, through the discounting of credit, have to be made for thrifts to meet established targets for financing that housing.

Essential to any bailout is setting up mechanisms to insure that such a crisis does not happen again. Since de-regulation was clearly part of the problem, re-regulation is part of the solution. Laws need to be strengthened, penalties increased, enforcement needs funded. And it should be explicit that a bailout leaves the thrifts beholden to the public. The S&Ls would like to pretend that they can go back to business as usual after the bonds have been paid off and the oversight committees have left town. But the ground rules are changed forever. New York City now has the most sophisticated fiscal reporting and labor-contract cost prediction systems of any local government. Chrysler gave stock to its union employees during the bailout, the president of the United Auto Workers is on its board, and the company is using its commercials to thank America for having stood by it.

The thrifts must change. Congress must demand that they meet additional obligations: the obligation to finance affordable housing; the obligation not to redline against minorities; the obligation not to gamble with other people's money; the obligation to accept regulation of costs and profits; and the obligation to be open to public scrutiny.

CAROL O'CLEIREACAIN

Carol O'Cleireacain is the chief economist of District Council 37 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and a member of the steering committee of the Financial Democracy Campaign.

BEAT THE DEVIL.

How Swapo Got Framed

After seventy-four years of illegal occupation, broken agreements and overall barbarous behavior, any claim South Africa might make concerning Namibia should be treated with skepticism. But through the first week in April we were afforded the repellent though not entirely surprising spectacle of U.S. journalists relaying, without apparent reservation, the briefings of South African security officers. The South Africans may fairly exult. Not only have they got Margaret Thatcher and most of the international press in their corner, but they have also been well served by the very U.N. officials charged with supervising Namibia's progress toward liberation from the South African yoke.

In a propaganda coup, the first twenty-four hours are all-important. In the case of Swapo's supposed "incursion" from Angola on April 1, South Africa's version of events and its interpretation of treaties won almost instant acceptance in crucial quarters. Hundreds of heavily armed Swapo guerrillas, so the story went, had surged across Namibia's northern border, flouting the accords laboriously hammered out by the United Nations, the United States, Cuba, Angola, South Africa and Swapo itself. Beleaguered officers of the U.N. Transition Assistance Group (Untag), seeing hopes of peace disintegrate in the face of Swapo sabotage, had no choice but to call in South African counter-insurgency groups—notably Battalion 101.

Every element in this scenario is untrue. All of them appeared in reports from Namibia by Christopher Wren of *The New York Times* and William Claiborne of *The Washington Post*, both gentlemen being well representative of the credulity of most of their colleagues. The supposed invasion began on Saturday, April 1. By Wednesday, April 5, Wren mused that "the rebel group has not disclosed why it mounted so large an infiltration," and speculated that Swapo wanted to have a force in place to be protected by U.N. forces from the South Africans. That same day a *Times* editorial denounced "what appears to be a brazenly illegal infiltration" by Swapo, adding that this "jeopardizes the U.S.-orchestrated Namibian independence agreement." A day earlier *The Post's* editorial could have been imported wholesale from a South African government press release: "The South Africans . . . demanded that the United Nations . . . call SWAPO to account. Everyone is now waiting to see just how well the United Nations does a job which, with its Third-World tendencies, will be painful for it."

The first days' accounts, prepared miles from the scene, depended entirely on South African "intelligence briefings," as Wren admitted on April 5: "Reporters have not been allowed into the combat zones to confirm South African intelligence reports." The international press was mustered in Windhoek, seeking news from South Africans and from Untag officials, who had every reason to cover up one of the most scandalously handled operations in the history of the United Nations.

April 1 was to have signaled the commencement of the truce decreed by U.N. Resolution 435. This truce, requiring

a cease-fire through U.N.-supervised elections in November, calls for South African forces, at least 60,000 in total, to remain in barracks under Untag oversight, but also for their fairly rapid drawback. What was required of Swapo? David Beresford of the British newspaper *The Guardian* (whose coverage has been excellent) reported from Windhoek on April 5 that the oft-invoked pledge by Swapo to keep its forces north of the 16th parallel (about ninety miles inside Angola) has never existed. The accord signed in Geneva by Cuba, Angola and South Africa last August stated that in the event of South African withdrawal from Angola and a truce in Namibia, Angola and Cuba would try to keep Swapo forces north of the 16th parallel. A letter on this accord signed by Swapo leader Sam Nujoma a week later contains no undertaking to honor this agreement, to which Swapo, contrary to mainstream insinuations, was not a signatory. On April 4, Cedric Thornberry, a senior U.N. official in Windhoek, admitted as much, saying the United Nations had "no official knowledge" of the Geneva agreement.

As Beresford wrote in *The Guardian*: "The implications of an absence of any agreement by Swapo to withdraw behind the 16th parallel are huge. It would mean that responsibility for the present bloodshed would be attributable to the side which first broke the ceasefire agreed to by South Africa and Swapo. . . . There is evidence to suggest that Pretoria's forces first opened fire and Swapo guerrillas were caught unprepared, having entered the territory thinking they would be protected by the ceasefire."

Beresford gestures accurately at what appears to be the sequence of events. As cease-fire day, April 1, approached, large numbers of Swapo guerrillas ventured south toward the border of their native land, Namibia, to join Swapo units that had long been operating *inside* the country. Two Swapo prisoners later captured by the South Africans told reporters that they had been instructed by their commanders to cross the border, make contact with Untag and then proceed to "bases" under U.N. protection. The vague terms of U.N. Resolution 435 and the various other agreements provide legal justification for such action by Swapo.

Songwriter Peter Hale, who visited northern Namibia in March and has been telephoning friends there daily, tells my colleague Rich McKerrow, "Everyone knew the 'kids' were coming across the border on April 1, including the South Africans. All these kids that ran away into exile are coming home for the first time in years to see friends and family."

Dudley Viall, deputy director of communications for the Council of Churches in Namibia, went north to the area of fighting on April 3 as part of a C.C.N. delegation and said subsequently by telephone to McKerrow that the "guerrillas were returning believing that they would be allowed safe passage, . . . expecting Untag. . . . They ran into the South African police." One wounded eyewitness, Jekonia Ngenokesho, told the C.C.N. that he had been approached by one Swapo man asking for water who told him that the guerrillas were regrouping to meet U.N. authorities, not to fight. In the midst of their conversation Ngenokesho and the man

ALEXANDER COCKBURN

were suddenly fired upon by the South African Defense Force: "The people who fired first were the S.A.D.F."

There were no Untag reception points. This disastrous absence can be traced back to the U.N. Security Council's decision at the start of this year, assented to by Gorbachev's new-look "de-ideologized" diplomats, to cut U.N. troops for the Namibia mission from 7,500 to 4,650. This decision, purportedly stemming from budgetary concerns and faith in the new "post-cold war" atmosphere, was in effect an announcement that the U.N. commitment to stay South African sabotage was frail. By April 1 the Untag presence in northern Namibia was virtually nonexistent. What transpired beginning that day was ambush rather than invasion, as casualty figures show. In the first five days, one widely disseminated body count claimed that out of 200 dead, 179 belonged to Swapo. Actually the United Nations seems to have been sponsoring executions of guerrillas belonging to Swapo, which it has long stated to be the "sole and authentic representative" of the Namibian people. In a London *Sunday Telegraph* dispatch from northern Namibia on April 9, Simon O'Dwyer-Russell reports that he examined Swapo dead and found that "most had apparently been shot in the face at close range with small calibre weapons." He asked a police tracker if they had been killed after surrendering and got the answer, "What does it matter? They are all Swapo, and they are dead. That is all that matters."

But the U.N. story is not simply a matter of bungling and logistical incompetence. On April 1, South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha telephoned U.N. special representative Martti Ahtisaari (a Finn), raging about an invasion of what he said were 750 Swapo guerrillas, claiming that the police could not handle this and demanding that South African counterinsurgency units be called in. With Ahtisaari just then was Margaret Thatcher, who had made an "unscheduled" visit to Windhoek, meeting with Botha and also seeking to celebrate a triumph for moderation in dealing with South Africa. In the conversation she supported Botha, buttressing his threat that South Africa could walk out of the entire Namibian agreement. Thus ran the story circulating in Windhoek. According to U.N. Secretary General Pérez de Cuéllar's confidential report, on that same day he advised Ahtisaari to release South African forces, including the infamous Battalion 101, to "stabilize" the situation. Already in action against Swapo were members of Koevoet ("Crowbar" in Afrikaans), who supposedly had been disbanded but in fact were integrated into the police. They have long been accused of torture and random killing of civilians. It is as though the United Nations were supervising a truce in Angola and had called upon Unita to enforce it.

All in all the episode represents a triumph for South Africa (now hailed by all, including the State Department and *The Times* and *Post*, as the injured party), whose purpose all along has been to subvert the possibility of any Swapo victory at the polls in November. And the certainty of such a victory under any decent auspices, plainly beyond the capabilities and perhaps inclinations of Untag as represented

today in Namibia, lends edge to the basic point now being made by Swapo. Why on earth would they "invade" their own country (with pathetic irony leaving signposts to their whereabouts to guide the expected Untag reception parties) when they have only to wait until November to take it over by peaceful means? Who has cause to foul up implementation of U.N. Resolution 435: Swapo or South Africa?

The Sons of Onan

• Know a man by his friends. James Fallows's book *More Like Us* was lauded by Dennis Wrong in *The New York Times Book Review* for March 26. Wrong cites as an example of Fallows's mature wisdom his remark that the Vietnam War "will be important in history mostly for what it did, internally, to the United States, not what difference it made in Indochina." Hmm. Let's see. "World War II will be important in history mostly for what it did, internally, to Germans, not what difference it made to Jews, gypsies, Slavs."

On the evidence of this remark, Fallows and Wrong seem to be as one in preferring to forget—or have "history" forget—that the "difference" made by war in Indochina included a few million dead people. Perhaps Fallows prefers to remember the war's internal effect upon the United States because, indirectly, it set him on the road to fame and fortune. His 1975 piece in *The Washington Monthly* expressing second thoughts about draft-dodging during the war helped set the official intellectual and moral tone of the postwar period, which suggested that those who went to Vietnam, either voluntarily or under compulsion, were not only more courageous but somehow more virtuous than those who refused the trip. Soon after, Fallows's stock shot up rapidly and before long he was writing speeches for President Jimmy Carter, a man who, when asked whether the United States "has a moral obligation to help rebuild" Vietnam, said no, "the destruction was mutual." In other words, we bombed their villages and they shot down our pilots.

• I fear that James (Wanker) Wolcott has become discomfited by my speculations about the ravages wrought upon his countenance by solitary vice. In the April *Vanity Fair* he made one of his habitual middlebrow forays into middlebrow culture, reviewing the fiction of Kingsley Amis. At one point he quotes from Amis's novel *Girl*, 20 the reply to the narrator given by Sylvia to the question, "What makes you such a howling bitch?" As cited by Wolcott, Sylvia commences her response thus: "I expect it's the same thing as makes you a top-heavy red-haired four-eyes who's . . . impotent and likes bloody symphonies and fugues."

Glancing at this quotation Christopher Hitchens noted the ellipsis and had the sumptuous memory that Wanker had left something out. Until Wanker's tampering, Sylvia's answer reads as follows (emphasis added): "I expect it's the same thing as makes you a top-heavy red-haired four-eyes who's *never had anything to come up to being tossed off by the Captain of Boats* and impotent and likes bloody symphonies and fugues." Now, why should Wanker's trusty hand have failed him when it came to typing those words?

BELTWAY BANDITS.

DAVID CORN AND JEFFERSON MORLEY

■ Everybody Is Lying

That's the message of the forty-two-page document filed by the U.S. government in the Oliver North trial. Bush lied. Reagan lied. Shultz lied. Abrams lied. A whole host of lesser actors—generals, assistant secretaries—were also party to the deceit. They all concealed the fact that the so-called Iran/*contra* scandal was not about a small off-the-shelf operation run by some overzealous lieutenant colonel. It was about the executive branch's systematic effort to bypass Congress—and many national security bureaucrats had a hand in it. Overseeing much of this activity was Ronald Reagan, who, according to the document, was wide awake when it came to making deals for the *contras*. This single fact-filled document confirms what the Tower commission and the Iran/*contra* committees would not: Reagan policy in Central America was an expansive, covert operation against American democracy.

■ Packaging a Scandal

The revelations illustrate just how limited was the public and Congressional conception of the affair. The Iran/*contra* scandal was originally portrayed simply as an arms-for-hostage deal; also as North's sideshow in Central America, with retired Gen. Richard Secord serving as his sidekick in both. This was a supposedly rogue outfit that operated outside the Administration.

North and Secord were no "secret team" freelancing beyond the reach of the government. When Secord arranged three Israeli arms shipments to the *contras* in 1983, 1984 and 1986 he was acting not on his own but on behalf of senior U.S. officials, according to the North trial document. Adm. John Poindexter approved the 1986 plan, noting that the transaction would be camouflaged as "a private deal" between Secord and the Israelis. Secord's operations were one component integrated into U.S. policy.

■ Three Liars

The North document, an evasively worded summary of hundreds of classified papers, is perhaps most revealing about the scope and the audacity of the cover-up. Here are three of many examples:

§ George Shultz received adulatory reviews for his performance at the Iran/*contra* hearings. He testified that in the summer of 1984 he opposed aiding the *contras* through third countries, saying that Congressional support was essential to a successful policy. Yet, according to the trial document, the Secretary of State proposed in mid-August 1984 that the United States supply military aid to a third country (El Salvador) that would in turn pass weapons to the *contras*, enabling Congress to "wink" at lethal aid.

§ John Vessey, while Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, convinced the Chinese government to send anti-aircraft missiles to the *contras* when the Boland amendment was in effect. But when an Iran/*contra* investigator asked Vessey about U.S. plans "for keeping the *contras* viable," the gen-

eral replied (under oath), "I was aware of none. Supporting the *contras* was not our business."

§ Elliott Abrams, then Assistant Secretary of State, testified during the Iran/*contra* hearings that, as far as he knew, North was engaged only in monitoring the *contras*, not in directly assisting them. But, the document says, North and Abrams jointly considered an offer made to North by an Israeli official to furnish military advisers to the *contras*. The government filing also notes that after a representative of Panamanian leader Manuel Noriega told North that Noriega was willing to assassinate Sandinista leaders and conduct sabotage within Nicaragua, North "discussed the matter" with Abrams.

■ George, Take a Letter

The document and other trial evidence show that President Bush, who has pleaded ignorance regarding secret assistance to the *contras*, was not out of the loop. He apparently acted as a sort of policy errand boy. In February 1985, a gathering of top-level officials from every significant bureaucratic player—the National Security Council, the C.I.A., the Defense Department, the State Department and the Joint Chiefs of Staff—decided to offer "enticements" to the government of Honduras to insure its support for the *contras*. The senior policy-makers decided to send an emissary and agreed not to commit to paper any details of the quid pro quo. The next month Bush met with Roberto Suazo Córdova, the President of Honduras. Bush declines to answer all questions about the disclosures, insisting that he is concerned his remarks could prejudice the North jury.

■ The Democrats Who Didn't Bark

After the disclosure of the document Democrats raised little fuss, giving new meaning to the term "loyal opposition." Only when more documents surfaced, making it obvious that the Reagan White House had withheld key memos from the Iran/*contra* committees, did they begin to complain. But during the Iran/*contra* hearings, they swallowed whole the White House arguments that a thorough probe of U.S. *contra* policy would imperil certain foreign relations. The Democrats thus chose to avoid the path that would have led them to the recent disclosures.

"As long as I have a mind to think, a tongue to speak, and a heart to love my country," Senator Sam Ervin once thundered, "I shall deny that the Constitution confers any autocratic power on the President." Compare Ervin, the constitutional watchdog, to Jim Wright, the cornered weasel.

We asked one of Wright's top aides for the Speaker's reaction to the revelations about Bush. "There isn't any," the aide said. Is the Speaker contemplating taking any action? "We will not change anything at all. We are trying to reach bipartisan consensus on foreign policy with Bush and Baker and we will continue to do that." Was the Speaker surprised at the scope of the Reagan Administration's deceit? A long pause. "I don't think [Wright] had any reaction at all. I've got to run to a meeting." So much for the Constitution.

ARTICLES.

■ BIRTH OF A BAD IDEA

Jailing Mothers
For Drug Abuse

SUSAN LACROIX

Butte County, California, seems an unlikely place for babies to be born already exposed to cocaine and heroin. The quiet agricultural region three hours' drive northeast of San Francisco is noted for its almonds and olives, not the problems of the inner city, where the estimated rates of drug-exposed newborns have reached as high as 25 percent. But with the hospitals in this county of 175,000 people delivering a growing number of infants with symptoms of drug exposure, Michael Ramsey, the local District Attorney, decided something had to be done.

Last October, after consulting with area hospital administrators, mental health workers and law enforcement officials, Ramsey announced that county hospitals would start screening all newborns exhibiting symptoms of exposure to a controlled substance. Any positive test results might then be used as evidence to prosecute the mothers for illegal drug use—a misdemeanor that, unless the offender enters a drug treatment program, carries a mandatory sentence of ninety days in jail. The plan, believed to be the first of its kind in the nation, has drawn harsh criticism from attorneys, health care workers and civil rights activists across the country, who question the legality and ethics of inviting criminal-justice authorities into the delivery room. Judith Rosen, a founder of California Advocates for Pregnant Women, offers the following scenario.

A woman has just given birth and in walks someone from the Child Protective Services who wants the mother to be candid about her drug habits so that C.P.S. can help her and the infant. An Assistant District Attorney enters and begins, "You have the right to remain silent. . . ." The mother takes advantage of her constitutional rights and refuses to say anything. She then might be labeled "uncooperative" by social service agencies and would risk having her baby taken away.

Rosen knows this terrain well. In 1986, as a volunteer attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union in San Diego, she criticized the treatment of Pamela Rae Stewart. The 27-year-old mother had been arrested, jailed and prosecuted on a charge of criminally contributing to her baby's death by using illicit drugs and ignoring doctors' advice to stay off her feet and abstain from sexual intercourse during her pregnancy. Rosen argued that it was no crime to disobey a doctor's orders and asked, "Are we, as women, to have perfect babies and be subject to prosecution if we don't?"

Susan LaCroix is an associate at the Center for Investigative Reporting in San Francisco.

The case against Stewart was dismissed in 1987, when San Diego municipal court Judge E. Mac Amos Jr. ruled in a pretrial motion that the District Attorney's office erred in invoking a 1925 child-support law to prosecute her. Although this California statute makes it a crime for a parent willfully to withhold medical care from a child, and specifically includes the fetus in its definition of the word "child," it generally applies to situations in which pregnant women seek support payments from estranged husbands.

Were it not for the Stewart dismissal, Butte County's District Attorney Ramsey might have attempted to apply the same statute to drug users in his jurisdiction. The mothers of the county's drug-exposed infants "certainly appear to be abusing children," Ramsey says. But the courts have not recognized drug abuse by pregnant women as child abuse. So, says the D.A., he devised a "creative way of using the law": prosecuting for illegal drug use rather than for child abuse or "fetal neglect." This way, Butte County would be able to circumvent some of the legal issues raised in the Stewart case, such as whether a woman's basic right to privacy can be sacrificed to the state's interest in the health of her fetus. Also at stake is whether she can be branded a criminal for not following a doctor's orders despite court rulings that patients have the right to refuse medical care.

Such issues lie at the heart of a growing conflict between maternal autonomy and the extent of fetal rights, a conflict involving pregnant women's control over their behavior as well as their medical treatment during pregnancy. The Butte County controversy addresses only one behavior issue—drug use—in what conceivably includes any activity or environmental hazard that may harm the fetus, such as smok-



DRAWINGS BY J.C. SUAREZ

ing, alcohol consumption and hazards in the workplace. Feminists and civil rights advocates worry that the trend, if unchecked, could lead to the prosecution of pregnant women for even poor eating and exercise habits.

How far will the law go in enforcing a doctor's judgment that conflicts with the mother's wishes? In a survey published in the May 1987 *New England Journal of Medicine*, medical institutions in eighteen states and the District of Columbia reported thirty-six attempts over a five-year period to override through law a pregnant woman's refusal of therapy. In the interest of the fetus, hospitals have sought and obtained court orders for Caesarean sections, intra-uterine transfusions and hospital detention of pregnant women against their will. Court orders for Caesareans were granted in all but one of fifteen instances. A Gallup poll commissioned by *Hippocrates* magazine and published last May showed that support for intervention extends beyond the medical community to the general public. Nearly half those surveyed agreed that a woman who smokes cigarettes or drinks alcohol while pregnant—or refuses to have a Caesarean birth as recommended by her doctor—should be held legally liable for any related harm done to the fetus. Such findings are particularly puzzling in light of the general legal trend toward honoring patients' control over medical decisions. Recent court rulings have sharply restricted forced medication of psychiatric patients and have allowed mentally competent adults to refuse drug treatment, surgery and blood transfusions.

While acknowledging that pregnancy complicates the issue, advocates of reproductive freedom argue that forcing women to assume medical risks and forfeit their legal autonomy in a manner not required of men and nonpregnant women treads on the generally accepted privileges of medical patients: the common-law rights to bodily integrity and the constitutional rights of liberty, privacy and religious freedom. The courts have generally interpreted these rights to allow patients to refuse medical treatment when they disagree with a doctor's advice or object on religious grounds, such as in cases where Jehovah's Witnesses refuse blood transfusions. Many rulings, however, have denied pregnant women these rights, even forcing them to undergo major surgery when their religion forbids it.

Ramsey says he simply wants to prevent Butte County's women from harming their unborn children, by controlling their abusive behavior. He may be unable to change most of their behavior—smoking, drinking and other potentially harmful activities—but targeting illicit drug users is within his power. However, the plan Ramsey calls creative, critics call draconian. "A lot of people are very upset because they think it's punitive and not productive," says Lucy Quacinnella, an attorney with Legal Services of Northern California in Butte County. Citing a severe lack of county drug programs and treatment services, she says, "The real issue is that women are not getting the treatment they need before the baby is born." Ramsey counters that the prospect of a jail sentence will work as an incentive for drug-addicted women to enroll in "diversion" programs that allow some such women to avoid incarceration. "People with substance

abuse problems do not voluntarily get into these treatment programs," he says. He is confident that, faced with a choice between the drug diversion program or jail, women will choose treatment.

This argument is profoundly misleading, charges Judith Rosen, the advocate for pregnant women. "First of all, it's not up to the D.A. whether or not a woman gets into treatment" through diversion, she says. Only the courts determine eligibility, and the criteria for diversion are so narrow that it's very likely most of the women will be ineligible. Under the California penal code, a woman does not qualify if she has previously been convicted of illegal drug use or of any felony in the past five years, if she has previously been diverted to treatment or if she has ever had probation or parole revoked. Furthermore, a movement in California seeks to repeal the diversion law in hope of sending more drug users to jail. "We don't know that diversion will even be in effect a year from now," Rosen says.

Whether or not the law is repealed, Rosen predicts that most women prosecuted for illegal drug use will end up in jail, and that their babies will flood the state's already overburdened foster care programs. In jail, Rosen warns, "the mother won't get drug treatment, she won't get parenting classes and she won't get off the self-destructive cycle she's on." Meanwhile, the separation of mother and child could destroy what psychologists and social workers agree is a critical bonding period, causing emotional and psychological damage to the infant and feelings of overwhelming guilt and depression in the mother.

Perhaps the most widespread concern, voiced by obstetricians, lawyers and health care workers, is that the threat of drug testing and prosecution will frighten women away from seeking medical aid. The result may be a greater number of what San Francisco deputy city attorney Lori Giorgi calls "toilet-bowl babies"—babies born at home, in toilets and bathtubs and on kitchen floors, without medical attention. "We're seeing more and more of them because their mothers are too scared to go to the hospital," Giorgi says. "They're afraid their babies will be taken away."

Drug use among expectant mothers is a growing problem nationwide. While few studies have been completed on drug-exposed infants, a cross-section sampling of thirty-six U.S. hospitals compiled last summer by the National Association for Perinatal Addiction Research and Education in Chicago revealed that 11 percent of the women in those hospitals had used illegal drugs during pregnancy, including cocaine, marijuana, heroin, amphetamines and PCP. The effects of these drugs on fetuses and newborns include prematurity or stillbirth, prenatal strokes, tremors, deficient motor reflexes and learning disabilities.

As pressure grows to deal with the problem of drug babies, other states are considering punitive measures against substance-abusing pregnant women and new mothers. In Pennsylvania, for example, State Senator Jim Greenwood sponsored legislation last June to amend the civil child abuse law to include penalties for the presence of drugs or symptoms of fetal alcohol syndrome in newborns. Several

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other states, including Florida, Massachusetts and New Jersey, already have child abuse and neglect statutes designed to protect any infant harmed prenatally by its mother's drug abuse. Related punitive actions have also been taken by the courts. In Washington, D.C., a Superior Court judge last year sentenced a woman convicted of second-degree theft to 180 days in jail—an unusually harsh punishment for a first-time offender—because she was pregnant and tested positive for cocaine.

But such punitive action is not the answer—in Washington, Butte County or elsewhere. "If these mothers were walking away from treatment, I might feel differently," says Ann O'Rielly, director of family and children's services for the San Francisco Department of Social Services. "But they're not walking away from treatment—they're walking away from waiting lists."

Although Federal spending on drug treatment and prevention has increased substantially in the past several years, public clinics are still financially strapped and not equipped to deal with the crisis. Butte County is one of many in the United States that offers little or no treatment or support services for pregnant drug users. Women in the county addicted to heroin, for example, must travel eighty-five miles for treatment, to a private outpatient clinic in Sacramento, which charges \$200 a month for a methadone maintenance program. Without methadone, sudden withdrawal from heroin can be deadly to both mother and baby, but in Butte County the treatment price is out of reach even for many middle-income women.

What is not out of reach is jail sentences for pregnant drug users—a quick fix that makes it appear that something fundamental is being done about this public-health crisis. Butte County has yet to prosecute a mother under the new plan, but the A.C.L.U. vows to oppose District Attorney Ramsey's actions—in court, if necessary. Meanwhile, other organizations, including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, are speaking out against the trend toward forced medical treatment of pregnant women. But the U.S. Supreme Court is soon to hear arguments in *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services*, and if that leads to a reversal of *Roe v. Wade*, pregnant women's autonomy will be drastically altered. An adverse ruling would not only af-

fect abortion but would open the door for just the kind of intervention Ramsey and others seek in their misguided attempt to protect the unborn from drugs. □

■ WEST GERMANY LOOKS TO 1992

Fighting Off the Beer-Hall Boys

NORMAN BIRNBAUM

Chancellor Helmut Kohl of West Germany and his party, the Christian Democratic Union (C.D.U.), think of themselves as exemplary Europeans. Have they not, facing down Margaret Thatcher, pressed the other Europeans to move resolutely toward 1992? Then customs barriers are to fall, a new European economic union will be in place and the Federal German Republic, as the Continent's dominant economic power, will scale new heights of prosperity. Moreover, many Germans are skeptical of old-fashioned nationalism: They feel safer integrated into Europe. Yet Kohl and his party are anticipating the June 18 elections for representatives to the European Parliament with an anxiety verging on panic. What Kohl fears is that voters will treat the election as a referendum on his government.

In two recent local elections (West Berlin on January 29; Frankfurt and the state of Hesse on March 12) the C.D.U. suffered large losses. In Berlin the vote loss over previous pollings was nearly 9 percent, in Frankfurt nearly 13 percent. The Christian Democrats' smaller coalition partner in national government, the liberal Free Democrats, failed to break the 5 percent barrier required for a seat and have no parliamentarians in either city. The Social Democrats gained slightly in each city and the Greens (known in Berlin as A.L., for Alternative List) gained proportionately rather more.

Now both West Berlin and Frankfurt have Social Democratic Mayors, and the A.L./Greens are in government with them as coalition partners. Of the thirteen city commissioners in the Berlin Cabinet, eight are women, reflecting the insistence of both the Alternative List and the Social Democrats on sharing more responsibilities with women in their parties and public office. In Frankfurt the new Mayor is a young former federal minister, Volker Hauff, who personifies a new generation of Social Democratic leaders able to appeal to the middle sectors of the labor force. In Berlin the new Mayor, Walter Momper, was relatively unknown until he took over the party there in 1986, when nobody else thought it worthwhile. He has shown great skill in negotiating with the Alternative List and in selling the new government to the public. However, it is less the Social Democrats' strength

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than the C.D.U.'s weakness that accounts for these changes.

The ostensible source of the disaster for the Christian Democrats was the loss of votes to xenophobic parties [see Timothy W. Ryback, page 590]. No German party can form a government alone, and should anything like these municipal results repeat themselves in the national election set for late 1990, the C.D.U. is likely to be ejected from office. The Christian Democrats (and their Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union) thought that they had control of the extreme right-wing forces: They released into the atmosphere, from time to time, carefully measured clouds of xenophobic poison. However, the ultraright has outbid them.

The votes for the ultraright are more than prejudice, though; they are also protest votes over the C.D.U.'s general economic and social policies. To be sure, in 1988 some 200,000 ethnic Germans arrived from the Soviet Union, Poland and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Another 300,000 are expected this year. Forty thousand people moved from East to West Germany last year, with more to follow. From other countries, including African and Asian ones (a matter especially offensive to Hitler's spiritual heirs), 103,000 claimed political asylum in 1988. The West German Embassy in Warsaw last year issued three-quarters of a million visas, and many of the Poles have stayed on to work on the black labor market. Germany is not a nation that tolerates people sleeping on the streets, and the new arrivals have profited from its extensive system of social benefits—and from special provisions for the newcomers. Meanwhile, however, 8.7 percent of the labor force is unemployed, housing is increasingly expensive and scarce and the Kohl government's social and fiscal policies have evoked deep and widespread protests at their unfairness. Reforms in health insurance, pensions and taxes have been experienced as onslaughts on the lower and middle reaches of the working population. The more unreflective, echoing the Social Darwinism that Kohl has occasionally voiced ("We must reward achievement" and "We have to teach shirkers a lesson") have turned their fury upon the newcomers.

Kohl's C.D.U. has other problems. It appears arrogant, corrupt and incompetent. The suicide last year of the Christian Democratic Governor of the northernmost state, Schleswig-Holstein, climaxed an electoral scandal that resulted in a victory for the Social Democrats. Then there was the export of chemical-weapons manufacturing technology to Libya. True, this occasioned a splendid display of U.S. hypocrisy: We stockpile large amounts of chemical weapons on German soil and have blocked all efforts to ban such weapons by international treaty. The Kohl government, however, clumsily tried to deny both the facts and its own administrative slovenliness.

The ruling coalition has been divided on other issues, too. Its right wing favors generalized repression of political protest. It is also frenzied about abortion and opposed to the extension of women's rights in general. It propagates the absurd notion that Germany's borders can somehow be closed to foreigners, just as the European Community is about to widen. The right, with an ideology that recalls the authoritarianism and conventional racism of the Kaiser's Germany,

cannot accept the idea of a multicultural and pluralistic society.

The most effective C.D.U. leaders have opposed their colleagues' incurable nostalgia. For a while, the Minister of Youth, Family, Women and Health Affairs, Professor Rita Süßmuth, allied to the feminists, was the most popular C.D.U. Minister, but she has now been elevated by Kohl to the relatively unimportant post of Parliament president. Süßmuth scored even higher in the polls than the perennial Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who is liked because of his steadfast advocacy of détente and disarmament and his opposition to U.S. policies. The modern wing of the C.D.U. is headed by Secretary General Heiner Geissler, who can be described as a Social Catholic. If we move to the right, he has said, we will lose two- or threefold in the middle what we gain from the authoritarians and the xenophobes. Geissler thinks, in other words, that the Federal Republic is indeed a more democratic and open society than its beer-hall ideologues admit. He is, very likely, correct. What maddens the right is that a certain kind of cosmopolitanism and civic-mindedness is now normal in their country, a state of affairs they find somehow "un-German."

In one major sphere all the parties, even those of the right, agree. They outdo one another in championing détente and in opposing pressure from the United States for more resistance to Gorbachev's many initiatives. German autonomy within NATO is more evident than ever. About 20 percent of all conscripts refuse military service, and their numbers are increasing. During a NATO war game last month, Kohl gave proof of practical pacifism. The exercise reached the point at which a modest nuclear exchange—only a few million Germans and Poles dead—had occurred. The



Ausländer Raus!

On April 20, Adolf Hitler would have been 100 years old, and on this anniversary of his birth an ominous cloud looms over the West German political scene. In recent months, ultraconservative (read neofascist) political parties have made stunning advances in local elections. In West Berlin the Republicans, recently founded by a former Nazi SS officer, Franz Schönhuber, won 7.5 percent of the vote in a January election, jackbooting the veteran Free Democratic Party right out of the city Parliament. Last month, a local election in Frankfurt brought similar victory for the older and more overtly neo-Nazi National Democratic Party, which claimed over 17 percent of the vote in one precinct.

The two parties' language of nationalist pride and xenophobia does not appeal just to brown-shirt nostalgia; according to Schönhuber, up to 60 percent of his party's constituency is under the age of 30. Moreover, in the Frankfurt election, the National Party stole votes not just from the conservative Christian Democrats but also from the Social Democratic Party. The success of the extreme right has caused panic in West Germany's political establishment.

The Frankfurt and West Berlin results have also embarrassed Bonn. For the past four decades, the West German government has worked to efface the stigma of the Third Reich. In recent decades, Germany has opened its borders to tens of thousands of Europeans seeking work or asylum. It now offers a home to refugees from Eastern Europe and employment to laborers from Turkey, Yugoslavia and Italy. However, while Bonn cultivates the image of a kinder, gentler Germany, some Germans seem to be giving the world a different message: *Ausländer raus!* ("Foreigners out!")

The invective is unsettling. Belligerent nationalism on the part of the Germans plunged Europe into two world wars; racial hatred fueled the worst genocide in history. Do the recent election results mean that the Aryan *Übermensch* is once again stirring after the knockout blow of World War II?

The answer is probably no. Except for the rhetoric, the present animosity toward foreigners has little in common with the racism of the Third Reich. In the Federal Republic, the nascent xenophobia derives not from fanatical state ideology but from a tight job market and a sense that Germany is being overrun by foreign workers. In one district of West Berlin, Turkish workers and their families constitute approximately 80 percent of the population. A recent study conducted by the Chancellor's office predicted that by the year 2030 the number of foreigners in Germany would exceed 10 million and that within fifty years

"the proportion of foreigners could thus rise from 7 to almost 20 percent."

Many Germans fear the erosion of the country's national identity, and the rightist-extremist parties have forged these fears into a viable political agenda. They have also capitalized on the recent death of Franz Josef Strauss, who for decades provided a rallying point for the right flank of the conservative mainstream. Many conservatives have now drifted further right.

Following their devastating electoral losses in West Berlin, the Christian Democrats have attempted to shore up their right flank by borrowing rhetoric from the ultraconservatives. In the campaign preceding the Frankfurt elections, the Christian Democrats warned against turning Germany into "a land of immigrants." One of Germany's leading political parties suddenly found itself espousing slogans that uncomfortably echoed the Nazi hate-mongering of the 1930s.

The Christian Democrats' rhetoric, though, did not prevent a repetition of the West Berlin debacle. Thousands of conservative voters defected to the National Party's camp. Worse still, the Christian Democrats were roundly rebuked in the media for unshackling a formerly taboo subject. As in the Weimar years, racial issues can now command attention at the national level. And that will most likely continue.

In the 1990s, West Germany's political establishment will be forced to deal with an issue that has been absent from its political scene for the past forty years: assertive German nationalism. Bonn will have to reconcile the disparity between the interests of Germany as a nation and Germany as a member of the European Community. If it does not, Germany's democratic process will generate political parties that will address the "real concerns" of the German people.

For the present, with a strong showing in local elections, the ultraconservative parties have a solid foothold in local parliaments and can anticipate becoming a force in national elections. Brimming with confidence, Schönhuber has set his sights on the chancellorship. "[I] consider it possible," he recently told the German weekly *Der Spiegel*, "that one day, if not I, then another Republican will become chancellor." The chances of the Republicans making it to Bonn, let alone to the chancellorship, are extremely unlikely. Nevertheless, the very idea that the chancellorship and the extreme right can again be spoken of in the same breath is chilling, for that is the same circumstance in which Adolf Hitler, fifty-six years ago, celebrated his forty-fourth birthday.

TIMOTHY W. RYBACK

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NATO Command asked the Bonn government to agree to nuclear escalation. The deputy playing the role of Chancellor phoned Kohl to ask what he should do. Kohl's answer: *Wir steigen aus* ("We drop out"). That clearly contravenes what is the established U.S. policy in Europe, a readiness to fight to the very last German. C.D.U. parliamentarians have now begun to advocate an idea, first proposed by the peace movement and the Social Democrats, that U.S. strategists deplore: the restriction of NATO and Warsaw Pact forces to defensive arms and organization. The German consensus on détente is so great that the Bonn coalition and the opposition have been criticized by dissidents within East Germany for not being outspoken enough on their behalf.

West Germany's total integration in NATO and subordination to U.S. policy are things of the past. Its elites see the German role in Western Europe and its relations with the other German state, the Soviet bloc and the Soviet Union as concerns that are every bit as important as ties to the United States—and ones likely to be more so in the future. In these new circumstances German politicians are concentrating more on such issues as the management of the economy, the future of the welfare state and the quality of social life. Historians and philosophers debate the question of German identity; the rest of the nation acts, decidedly, as if it had already found a European vocation and turned its attention to less rhetorical matters.

The Social Democrats are not profiting from the change as much as they had expected to. The S.P.D. is the party of the French Revolution and of 1848, of anti-Nazism and of modern democratic citizenship. But it has been challenged by the modern faction of the C.D.U., whose Catholic ideas of autonomy and self-help for social groups now seem very up to date. The Greens, with their emphasis on consumer and environmental questions, on women's rights and on a new model of industrial society, have seized a good many initiatives. The party of both the labor movement and the democratic intelligentsia, the S.P.D. is struggling with the decline of the trade unions, and paradoxically with the consolidation of a new practice of democratic citizenship. Citizenship is so well implanted that the S.P.D. can no longer claim to be its sole or most effective champion. The German social contract is institutional, not the Social Democrats' exclusive property.

The present ruling coalition has made no very convincing attempt to impose Reaganism or Thatcherism on a society that remains attached to its welfare state institutions. The Social Democrats do not have an alternative model of society and are unsure of what to do about the economy. One of their gifted younger leaders, Governor Oskar Lafontaine of the Saarland, who may be the party's candidate for Chancellor in 1990, has called for a reconsideration of the nature and function of work. And the party's program committees turn out lots of readable reports on the future. Perhaps the Social Democrats will have to develop their ideas after 1990, in office—rather like the U.S. Democrats in 1933.

Germany's political future is difficult to predict. One early April poll on preferences for the June European Parliament

elections gave the Social Democrats 43 percent of the vote, the C.D.U. 34 percent (a record low), the Greens 9, the Republicans 7 and the Free Democrats just 5 percent. Should the C.D.U. actually do that poorly, Kohl may be replaced by Lothar Spaeth, a technocratic populist who is the successful Minister President of the rich state of Baden-Württemberg, having won his own state election by campaigning against Bonn. How he would do in the capital is unclear. Other local and state elections will precede the national ones of October 1990. The C.D.U., the Social Democrats and the Greens are all certain to be in the next Parliament, but the exact proportions are impossible to guess. It is now thought that a party of the far right, the Republicans, will enter Parliament. The Free Democrats, meanwhile, fear that they may not scrape together the necessary 5 percent. They have been advocates of détente, civil liberties and the free market. Everyone now favors détente; the Greens and Social Democrats appeal to the civil libertarians; and in West Germany the free market appeals decidedly only to bankers and industrialists—who do not constitute large numbers of voters. A large majority favors the social contract.

Arithmetically, any number of coalitions are possible. Politically, only some are plausible. The C.D.U. fears that even with a returned but diminished Free Democratic Party, it will not have enough seats to form a majority. Perhaps the Free Democrats would join the Social Democrats instead, as they did under Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt. The Social Democrats and Greens may put together a majority, a prospect that terrifies the right. Indeed, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* considers the possibility of Greens in national government as the end of Western civilization, if not of all human culture. The electorate is considerably calmer about it: The Greens are now a familiar group. A coalition of the C.D.U. with the right would polarize German society and engender an explosive situation. If nothing else works, the C.D.U. and Social Democrats may have to combine—but neither wishes for that. The least that can be said is that Germany has entered a new phase of its postwar history. □

New Days

(Continued From Front Cover)

tions. He replaced the Soviet Union's rubber-stamp parliament, or Supreme Soviet, with a smaller institution with greater powers, but took care that neither members of this new body nor its chair—that is to say, the President of the Soviet Union, a post destined for Gorbachev himself—should be elected by direct universal suffrage. Instead, they are to be chosen by the Congress of People's Deputies, whose 2,250 members have just been elected. To make matters even safer, one-third of those 2,250 deputies were picked indirectly by such organizations as the Communist Party, the labor unions, the Komsomol (Young Communists), the League of Women and various associations of scientists and writers. The justification for having such "reserved" seats is

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that, in a country only beginning to learn democratic ways, the experts, intellectuals and other reformers required for *perestroika* might otherwise have failed the electoral test.

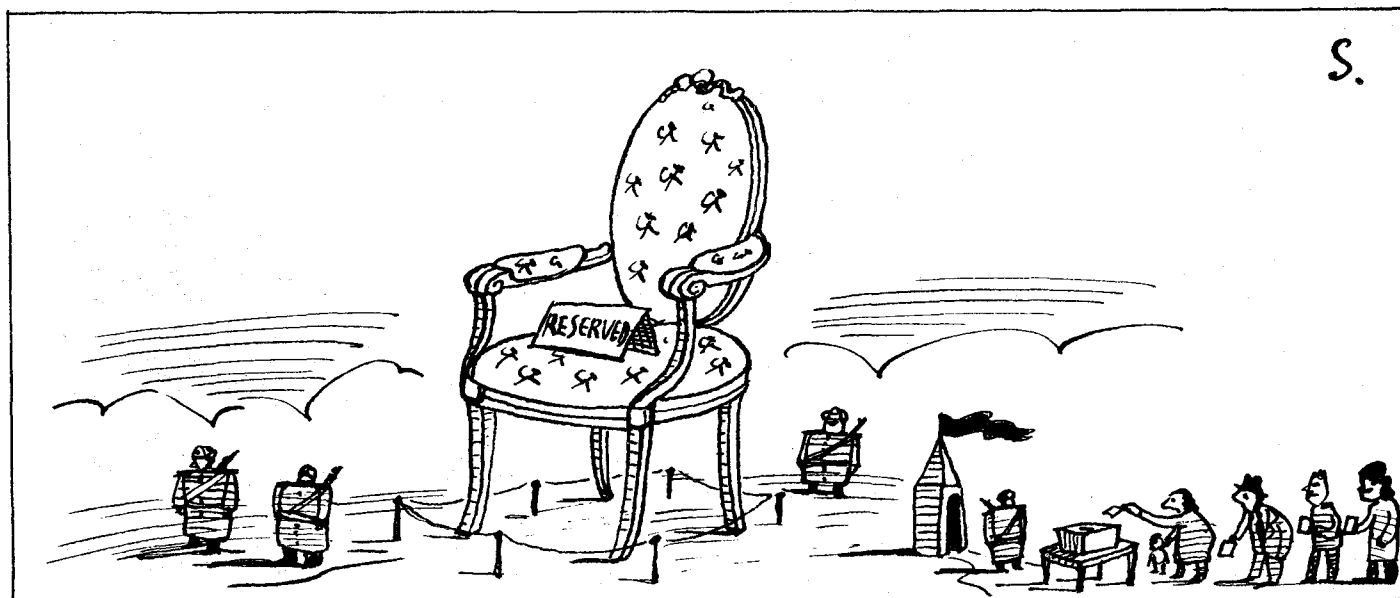
Voters were to disprove such skepticism. Since the rank and file of those organizations merely put forward candidates, leaving their leadership to do the actual selection and voting, the scope for manipulation in the indirect elections was tremendous. The Sakharov scandal at the Academy of Sciences was a good illustration: It took an international outcry and demonstrations by researchers in Moscow for the scientific bureaucracy to yield and give Andrei Sakharov as well as other reformers a second chance. For the Communist Party slate it was even simpler. The 641 members of the Central Committee who cast a vote had no choice: There were precisely a hundred names for a hundred deputy seats. But they could register a vote against a candidate. The usual unknown provincial candidates got in unopposed. But Yegor Ligachev, known as the leader of the conservatives, received seventy-eight hostile votes, a record. Next came Aleksandr Yakovlev, reputedly the most reformist, with fifty-nine votes against. Stalin must have turned in his grave observing the collapse of the cult of the General Secretary: Twelve people dared cast their ballots against Mikhail Gorbachev.

The remaining 1,500 deputies were chosen directly in two ballots on March 26 and April 9. But even in these direct polls the process of selection was quite frequently biased. Far from the Moscow limelight the bureaucratic establishment often managed to put pressure on the electoral commission to eliminate everyone but the candidate of the establishment's choice. In 384 constituencies there was only one candidate. The Soviet press highlighted the example of Kazakhstan, where seventeen regional party secretaries had a walkover, but there were plenty of similar cases in Russia and the Ukraine.

Other contests offered two or more candidates, giving a total of 2,901 contenders for the 1,500 seats. But the quality of the democratic confrontation varied from place to place. In the Baltic states, with their strong national fronts and a certain electoral memory, it was genuine. Elsewhere, voters

sometimes had difficulty distinguishing between candidates, who all proclaimed faith in *perestroika*. The absence of coherent, conflicting platforms and of publicity for political differences at the top did not facilitate the choice. And yet, all over the country, this first exercise in freedom has altered the political equation, if only by whetting the appetite. The humiliating defeat of top apparatchiks in Leningrad and Kiev, their names crossed out on the ballot papers; the election of Yuri Afanasiev, champion of historical truth; and the good showing by Roy Medvedev, yesterday's dissident historian, all show that Soviet citizens are more sophisticated and more reformist than had generally been assumed.

The case of Boris Yeltsin shows both the limits and the achievements of the process. Born in 1931, Yeltsin was a successful provincial apparatchik until 1985, when Gorbachev picked him for the key job of Moscow party chief. There he showed zeal in purging bureaucrats and attacking their privileges. Pressing for a quicker pace of reform, he clashed spectacularly with Ligachev at a famous session of the Central Committee in October 1987, and lost. He was down though not quite out. Kicked out of his Moscow job and the Politburo, he remained a member of the Central Committee and made a partial comeback at last year's party conference, where he again attacked the prerogatives of the *nomenklatura*. As the only leader who has dared to step out of line, Yeltsin has become a symbol. Tall and powerfully built, with a mane of white hair, the man clearly has charisma, though he is no great orator. Mistrusted by part of the intelligentsia because of his populism, and lacking a defined economic program, he stands as the scourge of the apparatchiks and the champion of the downtrodden. "I earn 85 rubles—less than half the average wage—and he knows that you can't live on it," proclaimed a woman supporter at one of Yeltsin's Moscow rallies. To pick up Moscow as a republican constituency—that is to say, the city as an undivided whole—was a stroke of genius. In that high-profile setting, as his enemies were to discover, it was no longer possible to eliminate a man through manipulation of the media and the other customary means. Indeed, the attacks



by the bureaucracy were Boris Yeltsin's best propaganda asset and helped turn his victory into a landslide. Gorbachev will now have to decide whether to treat Yeltsin as a potential rival or as an ally to speed up *perestroika*.

Among the counterproductive measures taken to cut Yeltsin down to size was the establishment by the Central Committee of a commission charged with investigating whether he had deviated from the party line. After all, whereas Gorbachev has publicly declared the impossibility of a multiparty system, Yeltsin repeatedly told interviewers that the idea should be examined—though not that it should necessarily be accepted. In any event, the whole issue of pluralism is full of ambiguities. By now, the Communist Party is a motley coalition. Among its 20 million members one may still find some Marxist internationalists. But it also contains nationalists close to the ultraconservative organization Pamyat, for whom all the country's woes, including Marxism and the Revolution, are due to alien ideas, to "cosmopolitans"—a euphemism for "Bloody Jews."

People who hanker after the "good old days" of Stalin coexist with those building a memorial to his victims; those who advocate a switch to the market and to sharp wage differentiation, with others who defend the *nomenklatura* and still others who are mainly concerned with defending the workers' wage packet. A variety of social groups are discovering their interests as they begin to crystallize, and are even beginning to express them openly. The electoral choice, as we have seen, would have been easier if differences at the top had received more publicity—if there had been, say, a Ligachev and a Yakovlev platform. One can imagine a situation in which other views are expressed as well, and in which their advocates, without necessarily forming a faction, are allowed to stick to their opinions even after being outvoted. It is along those lines that the road to democracy may be imagined in the Soviet Union. And it may well proceed within a nominally single party, at least to begin with.

The possibility of having several parties and yet little democracy is demonstrated by Poland. It is not widely known that the country has in fact been ruled for years by a coalition, in which the Communists have as their allies a Peasant Party and a Democratic Association. That ignorance may be forgiven, since these were puppet parties originally packed with C.P. faithfuls "appointed" as Peasants or Democrats for the occasion. It is only today, as the C.P. will require their votes in Parliament to have a majority, that these parties may acquire a certain importance, aspiring to represent some interests of the peasantry and the professional intelligentsia.

But Poland is obviously significant for another reason. Whereas reforms in the rest of Eastern Europe have come from above—spurred, it is true, by mounting social pressures—for the past twenty years in Poland they have been directly dictated by an increasingly active labor movement. Poland is once more breaking new ground. As the compromise just worked out is applied, it will do more than inaugurate labor-union pluralism in Eastern Europe. Representatives of

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the opposition will soon be a genuine and substantial minority in the lower house of Parliament and perhaps a majority in the admittedly less important upper house. Like Gorbachev, the Polish Communists have taken their precautions. They have a built-in majority in the lower house and they will also claim for themselves the new post of President, who will be elected for six years and endowed with great powers, including the right to dissolve Parliament. Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski and his comrades are playing for time. At the end of the present transition period they hope somehow to cling to power within a new model—let us call it consensus with conflict—one in which the opposition will accept the “foundations of the regime,” whatever the regime may have become by then. (Party theorists claim that this consensus will be a parallel of the Western system, in which, to all intents and purposes, it is impossible to opt out of capitalism by electoral means.)

Will Hungary go further still? So far it has set the pace only in economic reform leading to more free trade. After a period of substantial improvement and consequent euphoria, the country ran into trouble with a high rate of inflation and a crippling foreign deficit, and its leaders decided to cure the disease with a hefty dose of the same free-trade medicine. Hungary is to move even faster toward a market economy, with the proposed legalization of opposition parties as the political counterpart.

Speaking on Hungarian radio and TV last February, the academician Oleg Bogomolov, head of the Moscow Institute on the Economics of the World Socialist System, repeated his hypothesis that Hungary might become a neutral nation, like Austria or Sweden, and that this “would not threaten the security of the Soviet Union.” This comment buried the Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty with a flourish, and although Bogomolov was disavowed by a superior, Deputy Prime Minister Nikolai Talyzin, he was not violently attacked for his apparent heresy. Leaving aside Bogomolov’s rather absurd assumption that the capitalist world would allow Hungary to reach the level of Austria or Sweden, his concept of “neutrality” may correspond to Pozsgay’s idea of “social democratization.” The Hungarian party, in other words, may be trying to stick to power while changing regimes. Will it really cross the Rubicon? Although the answer is doubtful, the question is no longer entirely unrealistic.

No regime rests for long on bayonets alone. Nor does a country live by bread alone, as the author Vladimir Dudintsev put it in the earlier thaw of the Khrushchev years—or indeed by sausage alone, as some Soviet economists seem to think today. Standing amidst the wreckage of their neo-Stalinist gospel, the Communist Parties of Eastern Europe need to rediscover a project and a vision if they are to keep members, let alone win votes in genuine elections. For the time being, they show little imagination; their “socialist parliamentary democracy” has a strangely familiar air. Seen from a distance, in the best of lights, it looks very much like what used to be dismissed as “bourgeois democracy.”

Let there be no misunderstanding. Where the 5 o’clock

knock means the police, the rule of law looks like paradise on earth. In a country where very few of the living can remember a free election, even limited freedom is exhilarating and instructive. There are plenty of reasons, not all of them economic, for the people of Eastern Europe to look at us with envy. But living in the West, we are also aware of the seamy side of our societies. We know the spuriousness of that equality that makes it illegal for both the Baron de Rothschild and the *clochard* to sleep under the bridges of Paris. We know the sham of an electoral system that pretends that a Rupert Murdoch or a Robert Maxwell has no more clout than any Tom, Dick or Harry. We know that the Rockefellers stay in power even when they lose office. After all, we are aware that handing over our sovereignty at regular intervals to representatives elected by the people—or rather imposed on them by the power of money with the help of the media—is not the best way to gain mastery over our lives as producers and citizens. That is why, until the Stalinist bloodbath sapped their confidence, socialists used to speak with contempt of “bourgeois democracy.” Not because they wanted to relinquish the freedoms that people had won but because they wanted to expand the social content of those freedoms in order to give real meaning to such grand terms as liberty and equality. And that basic truth remains unchanged.

Bourgeois democracy is a conquest of the people, but it is also the reflection of certain property relations. To provide a socialist alternative one must move beyond this, spreading democracy rather than constricting it. This means extending it to the shop floor, to the life of working people in their factories and offices, if public property is ever to become the domain of the “associated producers.” It means granting genuine powers to the local soviets or their equivalents, so as to insure real decentralization, and then setting up a network of links and mutual controls between the periphery and the center, the grass roots and the capital, without which there can be no democratic planning. In short, it means inventing what hitherto has been a mere fiction: a socialist democracy. And this is not the same thing at all as adding a superfluous adjective to parliamentary democracy in its present Western sense.

A tall order? The vast social upheaval inaugurated by Gorbachev is only entering its fifth year. As Boris Yeltsin gathers the first fragile flowers of this Soviet spring, one major question dominates the transformation that is under way: Was 1917 a historical quirk, an aberration, a parenthesis that is now coming to an end? Or, to put the same question less gloomily, was it a utopian attempt, a portent of things to come in another place and another age? Put either way, the question implies that the whole Soviet venture can only have a capitalist ending. Yet there is another possibility. This is that for all its strange beginnings in backward Russia, its hopeless isolation and the resulting bloody tragedy, 1917 was the beginning of a process, of a vast movement that continues to search for another world, still groping toward a radical alternative. That is the unanswered question of this unfinished revolution. The answer remains crucial for their democracy and ours. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Chain Reaction

CHRIS GOODRICH

On December 22, 1988, in the waning days of the Reagan Administration, the Federal Trade Commission filed complaints against Harper & Row, Simon & Schuster, Putnam Berkeley, Macmillan, Random House and William Morrow—much of big-time book publishing—for violating the Robinson-Patman Act, an antitrust statute intended to insure that corporations don't manipulate the free market. The F.T.C. says that the publishers give favorable treatment to chain booksellers, which functions, as the commission's lawyers put it, "substantially to lessen competition in the line or lines of commerce in which favored and disfavored purchasers are engaged."

The "disfavored purchasers" are the independent bookstores, and the F.T.C.'s action makes them very happy. It confirms what they have been saying for more than a decade: that chain booksellers, mainly Waldenbooks, B. Dalton and Crown Books, have fueled their expansion in large measure with secret discounts extracted from the major book publishers. Perhaps more important, it shows that their 1986 victory in a similar lawsuit—filed by the Northern California Booksellers Association (N.C.B.A.) against the Hearst Corporation's Avon Books [see Goodrich, "Most Paperbacks Are in Chains," *The Nation*, May 4, 1985]—was no fluke. The Federal Trade Commission has been investigating the publishing world's pricing practices since at least 1980, but it took a court decision filed far from the hub of book publishing to prompt the commission to serious action.

The book publishers say the investigation should never have resulted in legal action. On the surface, the F.T.C. appears to be asking them only to play fair with the independent stores, but in essence it is telling publishers that they shouldn't give in to the demands of chain booksellers. The commission says that publishers should henceforth provide discounts, advertising allowances, promotional material, inventory control and the like

"on proportionately equal terms to all competing purchasers"—a reasonable enough request, were it not for the fact that many of those services have been instituted or customized to appease the chains. The "power aisle," for example, apparently originated with Walden's demand that publishers pay to have a title displayed prominently and in great numbers ("pile 'em high and watch 'em fly," in bookselling vernacular), and publishers are loath to offer that option to every bookstore. Likewise, publishers would rather not pay for most of independent stores' advertising costs, which is the arrangement Crown Books engineered; in 1988, 85 percent of Crown's \$4.2 million advertising budget was paid for, according to its annual report, by the publishers whose books were touted.

"The publishers probably feel they've cut a deal with the chains, and if they change it, they'll suffer," says William Petrocchi, former counsel to the N.C.B.A. "They fear the chains would retaliate and stop buying books from them, change their product mix, maybe even get out of bookselling altogether. It's a very low-margin business." The F.T.C. seems to agree with at least the first half of Petrocchi's assertion, saying that the benefits granted the chains were "merely to 'please and appease' their largest customers, 'the precise practice prohibited by the Robinson-Patman Act.'"

The publishers' fear of chain power may well explain their agitation with regard to the F.T.C. complaints. Harper & Row told *Publishers Weekly* that its pricing policy was "entirely fair to independents"; Macmillan said the F.T.C.'s allegations were "without merit"; Putnam Berkeley told the trade newsletter *BP Report* it would "vigorously contest the F.T.C. ruling"; Simon & Schuster released a statement saying, "The F.T.C. is going to have a real fight on its hands." The publishers have since filed a joint memorandum arguing, among other things, that the higher discounts given the chain stores have had no effect on the profit margins of the independents.

The publishers won't have to fight their battle alone. The chair of the F.T.C., Daniel Oliver, was the lone dissenter in the commission's decision to file the complaints. The publishers' practices, he argued, have probably not injured compe-

tition, fall into the "meeting the competition" exception to antitrust law and are justified by lower costs. Oliver's arguments are essentially those put forward by Avon, unsuccessfully, in the independent booksellers' lawsuit. Although only the cost-justification argument was actually litigated, District Judge Thelton Henderson seemed unhappy with the way Avon, a not untypical paperback publisher, dealt with independent bookstores—especially the secrecy with which it dispensed discounts to the chains. Henderson agreed with the N.C.B.A.'s assertion that these discounts saved the three major chains a total of more than \$12 million between 1981 and 1984.

The numbers testify to the extent to which the chains have changed the bookselling market. In 1972, according to Thomas Whiteside's 1980 examination of the book publishing industry in *The New Yorker*, 11.5 percent of the sales of trade books in the United States were made by the four largest bookstore chains; by 1979, the two largest chains accounted for about a third of both trade and mass-market book sales. (Interestingly, no trade publishing house would touch Whiteside's book; *The Blockbuster Complex* was eventually published by Wesleyan University Press and was never reprinted as a paperback). B. Dalton, which was bought by the Barnes & Noble chain in 1987, had 111 stores in 1974; it had 725 in 1985 and has about 1,250 today (a figure that includes 200 college stores and 200 sections in other stores, such as supermarkets). The comparable figures for Walden are, respectively, 246, 865 and over 1,400 (not counting 2,000 Readers Market sections in K mart stores, Walden's parent corporation). Crown, the best-seller and remainder discount chain, has grown even more rapidly, climbing from four stores in 1978 to 160 in 1985 and about 225 today.

The F.T.C. analyzed the numbers from another angle, but they tell the same story. The chains' share of the book market quadrupled, to 45 percent, between 1972 and 1987, "roughly the period during which the [chain] discounts have been in effect"; the market share of the independents dropped from 89 percent to 55 percent in the same period. And from 1981 to 1987 the number of chain outlets grew by 75 percent while the number of independent general bookstores grew by 5 percent—even though many independents, according

Chris Goodrich is writing a book about a year spent at Yale Law School on a fellowship for journalists.

to the F.T.C., surpass the chain stores in efficiency, which the commission considers the proper basis for a discount system. It's no wonder the F.T.C. has dubbed Walden, Dalton and Crown the "Big Three." (As in the N.C.B.A. case, the chains themselves were not named as defendants because it is difficult to make a case against a buyer under the Robinson-Patman Act.)

Publishers don't like to talk publicly about it, but their dependence on the chains became exceptionally clear during the controversy over Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*. Walden pulled the title from its shelves first, followed by Dalton, with the result that a huge percentage of Viking's retail outlets for the book vanished within twenty-four hours. (Independents, for the most part, emptied their shelves of the novel the old-fashioned way—by selling it.) A week later the chains relented, but the hiatus only underscored the fact that when the chains flex their muscles, publishers swoon. Just five days after *The Satanic Verses* was pulled, most of the heavy-weights of book publishing attended Waldenbooks' annual gala—before the decision to restock, and despite the fact that most of the guests had privately excoriated Walden's decision.

In the negotiations that preceded the filing of the F.T.C. complaint, the publishers themselves confirmed the power of the chains. They admitted to the commission that their discount schedules for trade books are "maintained by the demands of high-volume buyers," and they made public what had heretofore been only publishing industry rumor—that in 1974 B. Dalton and Waldenbooks had partially boycotted Doubleday, the publisher, when it refused to give them a discount above the one listed in its announced schedule. The publishers also noted that Dalton boycotted Bantam for two months when it, too, refused to give a chain discount. Both publishers eventually fell into line.

The Rushdie affair, and those earlier boycotts, demonstrate what may be at stake in the F.T.C. action. To Andy Ross, owner of Cody's Books in Berkeley, California, and former president of the N.C.B.A., it's a question of the sort of society the United States chooses to have. As Ross wrote in support of the N.C.B.A.'s lawsuit five years ago, "The retail book store is the primary instrument for the dissemination of ideas in our culture. It is too important an institution to be left exclusively in the

hands of a few large corporations." Ross also predicted the chains' reaction to the Rushdie controversy, saying that "if the chains come to dominate retail bookselling, the result will be a censorship of the marketplace that may ultimately prove a threat to our cultural life." Ross is somewhat less critical of the chains these days, ever since Cody's and a nearby Waldenbooks were firebombed for selling *The Satanic Verses*, but he still says that "it's unhealthy when the decision about a book is in the hands of two people whose stores control so much of the retail market."

That is not, of course, the whole story, for the chains have done some very good things for the book world. They have created a new market as well as changed an old; they have forced many bookstores to operate more professionally; they have sponsored literacy programs; they have made books seem accessible and "fun." But while it's true, as the publishers like to point out, that more books are published today than ever before, it's also true that books without chain support quickly drop from sight.

"It's not harder to get published" since the advent of the chains, says Jim Milliot, the editor of *BP Report*, "but it is harder to get distributed and harder to get read." He cites the virtual demise last year of Adler & Adler, the Bethesda, Maryland, publisher which on occasion had managed to convince a chain to stock its books—by Gary Hart, Kurt Waldheim, William O. Douglas and other political figures—but would inevitably find them returned in great quantities because they had not moved fast enough. Adler concluded that he couldn't afford to deal with the chains, but after seeing that this decision left him with only 600 appropriate general-interest bookstores to sell to, decided that he couldn't afford to be a publisher at all. Unless the independent bookstores develop a strong network, Adler told *BP Report*, books like his "will die on the vine." Adler currently publishes only backlist books, and bemoans the fact that "word-of-mouth books," books that aren't presold to the public for distribution through the chains, "don't get the chance they used to."

And that, at bottom, is what frightens the independents most—that decreasing competition in the bookselling marketplace necessarily results in decreasing competition in the marketplace of ideas. Their ultimate concern is for values, such as a diversity of literary voices, that simply can't be expressed in the terms that

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That's what "Boss" Tweed demanded when he saw the handwriting on the Hall (Tammany, that is).

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and Thomas

Nast put

bitingly

eloquent

political

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the middle of

American

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antitrust law prefers. The F.T.C. appears to sympathize with that point of view, however, for it notes in legal papers that the chains' way of doing business may have "skew[ed] the market toward a certain type of retailer (e.g., low inventory, low service) over another type (e.g., high inventory, high service) when consumers

would not have made this choice had competition been on the merits." That formulation of the problem may be "an abstract intellectual exercise," as F.T.C. chair Oliver calls his commission's decision to file complaints against the six publishers, but it may be just the sort of exercise that the publishing industry needs. □

AIDS Words

GREGORY KOLOVAKOS

CITY LIGHTS REVIEW, No. 2. Forum: AIDS, Cultural Life, and the Arts. Edited by Amy Scholder. City Lights Books. 196 pp. \$9.95.

AIDS AND ITS METAPHORS. By Susan Sontag. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 95 pp. \$14.95.

AIDS: The Burdens of History. Edited by Elizabeth Fee and Daniel M. Fox. University of California Press. 362 pp. \$25. Paper \$11.95.

REPORTS FROM THE HOLOCAUST: The Making of an AIDS Activist. By Larry Kramer. St. Martin's. 284 pp. \$18.95.

Since the first distant rumblings of an AIDS epidemic were heard in the press back in 1981, it has been language that has determined society's response to the progress of this disease. Language and its absence, that is, because while many of us were comforting and eulogizing, pleading and shouting, others remained silent. Their silence came to mean *our* deaths because they had the power to increase research budgets and release appropriated funds. But while Ronald Reagan chose not to mention the epidemic until 1986, others close to the imperial throne were eager to speak out. Patrick Buchanan ("The poor homosexuals—they have declared war upon Nature, and now Nature is exacting an awful retribution") and Jerry Falwell were perhaps the most vocal, but William F. Buckley Jr.—who proposed tattooing the arms and buttocks of people testing positive for HIV—and Representative William Danemeyer were also raging against the deviates. These are, of course, the fools

most easily dismissed. However, when a noted gay novelist states on National Public Radio that half the gay men in America will be dead in five years, our tendency is to accept his ravings without recognizing that they are only at a different level of hysteria.

Paula A. Treichler writes: "We must examine how language itself produces what we think we know; and if we are to intervene, language is one place that intervention must take place." The four publications reviewed here reveal the uses and abuses of language in the discourse about AIDS. The languages here are variously impassioned and dispassionate, analytical and testimonial, informing and deforming.

City Lights Review, No. 2, the annual from San Francisco, contains a lengthy forum entitled "AIDS, Cultural Life, and the Arts."* Most of the language in it is testimonial, emerging from personal struggle or from solidarity with friends and lovers living with AIDS. Editor Amy Scholder cast her net widely and pulled in responses from writers and artists including Kathy Acker, Carol Leigh, Robert Glück, Karen Finley, Gary Indiana, Lynne Tillman and Edmund White, among many others. Cindy Patton calls attention to "AIDS words," while Sam Ambler's poem "After the Howl" names men and women dead now in this epidemic. Ambler's poem is as powerful as the Public Theater's set for Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart*, in which names of the dead covered the walls of the theater and spilled out into the staircases, making the disease recognizable, graspable in its horror. Given the subjective nature of these responses, there are excusable excesses here. Novelist Sarah Schulman calls AIDS "the disaster of my generation. It is our holocaust, our civil war, our blacklist, our Vietnam." Eileen Myles declares, "There are simply fewer artists. Already that's a fact."

* The issue of *City Lights Review* contains a brief autobiographical essay of mine.

Most of all, the statements published in *City Lights Review* represent various attempts to make sense of this epidemic on the part of artists and writers, gay and straight. "The plays and other performed writing that the FCC is trying to keep off the air, the poetry, fiction, essays, and autobiographies that gay writers continue to craft during our Holocaust: all represent artifacts that help us think and feel our various ways through this dangerous period in all of our lives, while also recording our ordeal for those who will follow us," declares Jack Collins. But there's something very wrong with his sentence. This is not just a gay disease, and it is not only gay writers who depict these ordeals. I have no difficulty with the preferred noun, holocaust, whether in upper or lower case; I would argue only that such language incorrectly depicts the landscape of devastation and loss because many of us are surviving.

Writes Robert Glück in "HIV 1986-88," "AIDS is the disease of the 80s. Why? Well, the destruction of the immune system is an allegory of the breakdown of 'basic structures' now experienced by our country and the West." Susan Sontag in *AIDS and Its Metaphors* would agree with Glück, placing the epidemic as she does in the context of apocalyptic thinking, inevitable in the waning years of a millennium. "There is also the need for an apocalyptic scenario that is specific to 'Western' society, and perhaps even more so to the United States." Sontag is correct in seeing the conflation of apocalyptic thinking with reactions against modern permissiveness. Thus the disease can be represented as punishment for deviant sexual behavior and at the same time as something that will affect the "general" population. Needle users, homosexuals and prostitutes are the guilty ones, hemophiliacs and children the innocent victims.

Sontag's book, as slim as a pamphlet, might better have been appended to a new edition of *Illness as Metaphor*. Ten years after that book, she is once again arguing against thinking of diseases as metaphors, and she again refuses to allow that such thinking can be helpful to people. She rails most strongly against military metaphors ("We are not being invaded. The body is not a battlefield. The ill are neither unavoidable casualties nor the enemy"), apparently unwilling to admit that fine writers like Paul Monette and Emmanuel Dreuilhe, who have experienced the horror firsthand, have crafted moving works about AIDS with language

Gregory Kolovakos teaches in the creative writing program at the City College of New York and is at work on a novel, *Crash Course*. He is a board member of the Los Angeles-based Words Project for AIDS.

taken from the military. It is also perplexing that a writer who has devoted as much consideration to how language is used as Sontag has can employ value-laden nouns, such as sodomy, without comment.

Eight years into this language-laden plague, the discourse on both the right and left has shifted dramatically. Statements such as Sontag's "The survival of the nation, of civilized society, of the world itself is said to be at stake—claims that are a familiar part of building a case for repression" more accurately describe the early years of the epidemic, when Representative Dannemeyer could mutter about detention centers for all those diseased people. We have come a great distance from the hysterical demonstrations in Queens, in Indiana, in Florida, of parents wanting their children protected from HIV-positive classmates.

There are moments of intelligence in Sontag's book, especially when she draws historical parallels with past epidemics (cholera, influenza, polio). Her analysis of contemporary sexuality—"Fear of sexuality is the new, disease-sponsored register of the universe of fear in which everyone now lives"—places the AIDS epidemic of this decade in a context of American moralism about sex in general. But in insisting that "we are in the early stages of a sexual depression," Sontag makes some batty statements about sexuality and capitalism. Her point of view is consistently unclear. She writes that "the response to AIDS is more than reactive, more than a fearful and therefore appropriate response to a very real danger. It also expresses a positive desire, the desire for stricter limits in the conduct of personal life." Ah, the silver lining of the AIDS cloud. So here's Sontag at the end of the millennium, aware of Ortega y Gasset's concept of generations as she grows more conservative and defensive, reacting to the "fashionable libertinism of recent decades." This is nothing but shallow revisionism that is taken seriously only because it comes from Sontag's typewriter. Sontag praises the "growth of the ideal of monogamy, of a prudent sexual life," and here she sounds like she's cribbing from Erica Jong, who wrote in *New Woman* that AIDS will make sex "a little more mysterious and precious again."

In a frequently quoted sentence that is indeed the most troubling in her essay, Sontag insists: "The behavior AIDS is stimulating is part of a larger grateful return to what is perceived as 'conven-

tions,' like the return to figure and landscape, tonality and melody, plot and character, and other much vaunted repudiations of difficult modernism in the arts." Who's grateful here? Sontag? Midge Decter? The women and men dead from AIDS? *AIDS and Its Metaphors* will be viewed as a modern-day primer on the epidemic because of the name of its author. But for its shallowness, its confused politics and the author's revisionism, it should be brushed aside.

AIDS: The Burdens of History, edited by Elizabeth Fee and Daniel M. Fox, does a much better job of setting the epi-

demic in historical context. It is the most intelligent collection of essays on the subject that I know. This is not to say that there are no real lapses here (Charles Rosenberg talks about a fatality rate approaching 100 percent, when recent medical evidence argues the contrary), but essays by Paula A. Treichler, Allan M. Brandt, Dennis Altman and others challenge the construction of the disease and the discourse defining it. Introductory essays discuss past epidemics and demands for quarantine; later chapters examine the AIDS epidemic from the perspectives of social policy, public health

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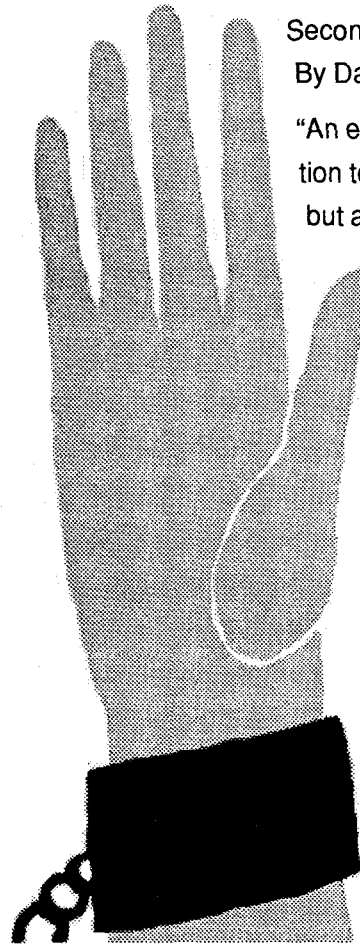
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and the gay political movement. Despite occasional mistakes in language (David Musto, for example, refers to AIDS "victims," a term rejected by people with AIDS) and repetition that could have been addressed by the editors, *AIDS: The Burdens of History* has one extraordinary benefit: In its lucidity and calmness, this collection of essays goes a long way toward establishing a broader context for the epidemic and the responses it has engendered.

Treichler's essay, "AIDS, Gender, and Biomedical Discourse," rejects the current construction of AIDS as a male-only, sexually transmitted disease. There is, however, no greater constructionist of such a view than Larry Kramer. Kramer's *Reports From the Holocaust: The Making of an AIDS Activist*, is really two books. The first section contains letters, memoranda and Op-Ed pieces published in *The New York Times* and essays from the *New York Native* and *The Village Voice*. Printed between 1978 and 1988, these writings trace one man's vociferous struggle to place AIDS on everyone's agenda. The second part of the book is a lengthy and meandering essay dealing with Kramer's own sexual odyssey, his feelings about the gay male community and the epidemic that he sees as a gay holocaust.

For those readers who have not followed Kramer's diatribes in New York publications, some of this writing may provide a history, however biased and repetitive, of the AIDS movement and of the government's response to the epidemic. Kramer was, after all, a founder of the Gay Men's Health Crisis (G.M.H.C.), which he later came to attack, and of the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP). But Kramer's politics are meanspirited and exclusionary, centered around himself. There is no vision here, only a need to call people who disagree with him "wimps" and "sissies" ("How gay men hate this word!"), to denounce

people he had once praised as now "equal to murderers, with blood on your hands," because they have not responded to his demands. (I think of his attacks on Virginia Apuzzo, for example.) While Kramer quickly admits that he is not a good follower, not a good board member, he fails to understand that in a political process it is not enough to sputter and rage and occasionally threaten never to speak out again.

The final section of the book, the essay entitled "Report From the Holocaust," reveals the confusion of Kramer's thinking. "As gays become more visible, we provoke more hatred. . . . we have, in many cases, comfortable disposable incomes that allow us to live well and deny ourselves little in the way of consumer goods. . . . We have, in most cases, no responsibilities raising children." Kramer's spent too much time on Fire Island and in the West Village. How about the gay poor and homeless across this country? What about the comfortable disposable incomes of gay men and lesbians who are attacked in shelters? What about all the gay and lesbian parents who meet regularly at the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center in New York? What about the millions of us who came out after heterosexual marriages and the birth of children? What about the responsibilities we've taken on for aging parents and for friends in this very epidemic? Or this from the man who so viciously attacks his colleagues in essays reprinted in the volume: "Gay organizations in every major city seem eventually to fall victim to endemic bitchiness and bitterness."

Kramer claims that "most gay people see little to admire or to emulate in heterosexual life." I doubt if such an absurd generalization holds true for New York and San Francisco, much less for the millions of lesbians and gay men around this country. The vast majority of gay men and lesbians simply want to go to work, to shop in the local malls, to watch sitcoms, to lead lives in which sexual preference is not the lightning rod. Kramer would have it be. Besides, we shouldn't fall into the trap of accepting Kramer's definition of who's gay. We all know too many men, heterosexually married, who make excursions into homosexuality from time to time. Gore Vidal, who has long insisted that the categories make no sense, is right. You see, it doesn't divide down the lines Kramer draws. It's not straight and gay, us and them, unless you're Buchanan or Kramer.

Kramer equates sexual freedom with promiscuity and writes, "There's no question that the promiscuity of some gay men was unwittingly responsible for AIDS killing so many of us." There's the old wages-of-sin argument—those more sexually experimental killed "us." Sontag explicitly agrees with Kramer: "Promiscuous homosexual men practicing their vehement sexual customs . . . could be viewed as dedicated hedonists—though it's now clear that their behavior was no less suicidal" than that of addicts sharing needles. Are such pronouncements so distant from Falwell's statement about reaping "a harvest of corruption"?

Kramer goes on to say that, given the chance to marry, we would have shown those straights that we could be monogamous. But without such legal sanctions, "a good case also can be made that the AIDS pandemic is the fault of the heterosexual white majority." Got it? We don't want to emulate heterosexual life but we'd be monogamous if given the chance.

Near the end of Kramer's essay, filled as it is with lapses in logic, silly generalizations and misinformation, there is a telling transition. Kramer shifts on one page from a moving quotation from writer and activist Vito Russo to an announcement of three more friends' obituaries in *The New York Times* (Kramer insists that he has suffered through more deaths than anyone else) and then to this: "Since I started writing this, I've had a reconciliation with both my brother and sister-in-law." Kramer keeps coming back to *his* tortured autobiography, *his* pain. For Kramer, that personal suffering somehow translates into an exaggerated and hysterical vision of "the homosexuals' holocaust." Caught up in his personal drama, Kramer is immoral in representing the presence of the virus in a segment of the gay male population as a death sentence for all homosexuals. Lesbians are simply forgotten in Kramer's analysis of this "homosexual holocaust," this genocide. If *The New York Times* announced an AIDS fatality rate of 100 percent for all homosexuals, ACT UP would, correctly, demonstrate outside its offices. Why accept it when Kramer makes such stupid pronouncements? Writing such as this may serve a testimonial purpose to one man's pained existence, but I caution against anyone's extrapolating from this one angry man's raging.

Eight years into this epidemic, there is reason to believe that we still don't know the cause of acquired immune deficiency

The Graduate Faculty

K

Ira Katznelson
Nathan Kogan
Sonia Kruks

For everyone in The Graduate Faculty, *A through Z*, write or call for a Bulletin: Graduate Faculty, New School for Social Research, 65 Fifth Avenue, NYC 10003 (212) 741-5710

cy syndrome. The case builds against the easy and single explanation of HIV infection. Many of us are now a little wiser and a little more optimistic, as well as far more exhausted. We have fought our battles, alone or together, and we have won important (albeit incomplete) victories. Our coalitions have succeeded in placing AIDS on the national agenda,

in developing hospice care, in demystifying the disease. Today, in cities and towns across the United States, there are people diagnosed as having AIDS seven or eight years ago who have prevailed over the disease. The vicious bigotry of the first few years seems finally to be giving way to a greater enlightenment. The rantings of the hate-mongers (among

whom I include the obvious homophobes and, yes, Kramer himself) seem to be quieting. But make no mistake about it: These have not been kind years. Too many of us will never forget the scandalous medical care our friends received early in the plague. Few can forget the years of bad reporting in the media or, worse, the silence from the left as those

SPENSER'S TOWER

Kilcolman, Co. Cork

There is nothing left. The monument's a ruin
His poem was to be, its allegory broken off
Like a partisan. He sat inside this tower,
Or walked beside the Awbeg's illuminated
Page on which a sweep of sky's reversed,
And under these alders' small-branched virtues,
Putting a fantasy back together. The kingdom's
Come to nothing, too, his poem was to celebrate,
Its sovereign power a vellum-scaled garrison
Disguised as law. From this tower he looked
Down on the shawls and glibs of the vagrant poor,
Anatomies of death who made their meal
Of other corpses cut down from the English gallows.
The evill that is of itselfe evill
Will never come to any goode for us, he wrote
Before the rebels—in our sense, the underground—
Their faces slurred with dirt and long concealed
Behind the leafy oakblind, drove him out,
Set fire to his tower, his tour of duty,
And to his infant son, the unfinished account
Of a life spent trying to be somewhere else.

To whom do they belong now, this safehold,
The poem conceived as an empire's emblem,
The burning baby boy? Here in the field
Nobody's about. No historical marker.
Surrender or advance, I cannot tell which
The bog cotton's ragged pennants are signalling.
A mare, though, looks all at once my way,
As if to ask by what right do I threaten
The splayed, unsteady colt nuzzling her flank.
Is that how history looks, mutely accusing?
Minutes go by before she turns away and stares
At a foxglove's comb of honeyed canticles
Two bees are poring over. There's a story
In the morning newspaper under my arm
Of two policemen shot to death in Belfast
As they sat in a patrol car reading the paper.
Why should that be called a "story"? Does whatever
We read happen to us symbolically? Or to others?
Here in the kingdom of time and place
There are no beasts and bowers, no *whilom*,
No *wights*. Here is a country of ruins,
Vine-propped facing stone pushed back to clay,
The dead eating the dead down there,
And up here, where so many paths, so many
Turnings are to be seen that all is in doubt,
The way here and back again, a stair
That rises now into the murderous air.

J.D. McClatchy

QUATRAINS FOR PEGASUS

Breakfast over, to Memorial Park we'd go
On sunny Saturdays, I and Mrs McGrath.
We took care to approach the monument each time
By a new swamp-oak or palmetto-shaded path.

The paths converged at the heart of a parched fairway
Where Earth, not looking its best, rose out of the blue
Reflecting pool: Earth starved to a global ribcage,
Meridians of bronze—how the bare sky shone through!

Yet round it four horses of stone still fairly white
(Or just the one horse times four—with reflections, eight)
Held up the globe in a caracole that thrilled me,
Eager like them for the further, the ultimate

Thrill due on the stroke of ten. A black man in rags—
Making no secret of it as we looked his way—
Grasped something under the ground and gave it a turn.
The circulatory system brought into play

Filled the air with a magical diamond surf
Hoofs came plunging through, jets like fireworks rocketed
In four directions, as though from the horses' brows.
I wondered if passing through a white horse's head

Was curing the municipal water for good
Of its butts and tinfoil? Making trees toss with joy,
Flagstones glitter and steam? Would the process also
Help Mrs McGrath's bad hip, make me a good boy,

And keep—for each morning paper brought fresh horrors—
Our whole world from starving like the Armenians,
Its bones from coming to light like the Lindbergh baby's . . . ?
Mrs McGrath's young brother lay buried in France,

And these were questions—what if she knew the answers!—
I was too little and tactful to ask my nurse.
The more she said, the wicked the world got.
Don't let it, I begged the horses, get any worse.

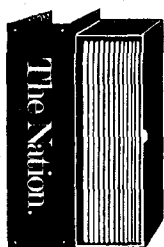
James Merrill

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"other" communities came to feel the impact of the virus.

Eight years into the epidemic, we have also begun to accumulate the testimonies of those who have lived this nightmare, and we are developing a discourse that makes connections with other medical and social issues and other segments of the population. We have Ann Fettner and Paula A. Treichler, Paul Monette and Cindy Patton, Lawrence Mass, Allan Brandt, Douglas Crimp (and others like Robert Ferro, dead too young), who have all written brilliantly, personally, controversially about this epidemic. Perhaps, like Monette, we "don't have the ghost of a lease on a better world" ("Readiness," from *Love Alone*), but we continue our struggle in this troubled and imperfect one. □

ART.

COCO FUSCO

**Border Art Workshop/Taller de
Arte Fronterizo**

We welcome you, but first we must fingerprint you, interrogate you, probe you, scope you. . . . We exempt you, we absolve you, we exonerate you, but only if you qualify for our benevolence. . . . We forgive you, but first we must certify you, standardize you, normalize you, merge you, melt you, validate you, authenticate you, assimilate you. . . . We want your blood, we'll give you trickle down theories. . . . We want your sweat, we'll give you annual yields. . . . We want your dreams, we'll give you the AMERICAN DREAM. —Border Art Workshop

A new perspective on the Mexican-U.S. border is developing within the artistic community of the Southwest. To the San Diego/Tijuana-based multidisciplinary Border Art Workshop/Taller de Arte Fronterizo, the border is not a chasm separating two worlds but a symbolic landscape. Its members see the cultural interpenetration that characterizes everyday life on each side of the border as a force of change that is transforming both Mexican and American culture. Engaged with this process and constantly searching for aesthetic and theoretical vocabularies to express it, the group de-

Coco Fusco is a New York-based critic and curator.

clares its work to be a "topography" for a multicultural future.

Formed in 1984 by Guillermo Gómez-Peña, Michael Schnorr and David Avalos, among others, the interdisciplinary band, comprising artists, writers and educators, are as influenced by the multimedia techniques of Fluxus as they are by Pop-flavored Mexican neográfica. Their work moves from journalism to theory to poetry, from art show to street theater, and from activism to farce. They do not celebrate Latino life at the border, but rather explore the complexities of cultural identity in order to deconstruct the concept, posing a bicultural challenge to immigration officials, English-only laws and other forms of ethnocentrism.

Despite the heterogeneity of forms they use, the members of BAW/TAF have a unifying strategy. They present a spectacle of life at the border, setting performances at a re-created Casa de Cambio or on the dividing line itself, to explore the symbolic implications of each site. The magazine produced by Gómez-Peña, Emily Hicks and Marco Vinicio González, *La Línea Quebrada/The Broken Line*, has put into print an array of comic inversions of official history of U.S.-Mexican relations, cartoons and "border semiotics" (about which Hicks is completing a book). Although uneven in their effectiveness, all these works attempt to subvert the idea of two countries and two cultures as separable entities.

It is not as if the hybrid cultures of the Southwest have never been represented in a gallery. Corporate backing of shows by Latino artists and institutional efforts to include their work have become increasingly frequent throughout the country. Among the better-known touring exhibitions are: Hispanic Art in the United States: Thirty Contemporary Painters and Sculptors, which originated at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston and will be at the Brooklyn Museum in June; The Latin-American Spirit: Art and Artists in the United States, 1920-1970, initiated at the Bronx Museum of Art and opening at the San Diego Museum of Art on May 20; and Art of the Fantastic: Latin America, 1920-1987, which began at the Indianapolis Museum of Art. Through historical survey or emphasis on expressionist or folkloric arts, each showcase has tried to present a Latino aesthetic.

But BAW/TAF does not attempt to define a Latino aesthetic, nor are its efforts easy to understand. The group's dialectical reinterpretation of ethnicity and

assimilation, with its implicit critique of separatism, sets its art apart from the activist-inspired Chicano art that emerged in the 1970s. The emphasis on the border as producer of social meaning (legal tourist/illegal alien; documented/undocumented; Anglo/cholo) and on migration and cultural crossover as generators of bicultural vision and multiple identities sets the group's work between the postmodernist camp and the realm of populist protest art.

BAW/TAF is beginning to exhibit around the country as well as in southern and northern California. Its show at the Artists Space in New York City in January and February, *Vidas Perdidas/Lost Lives*, was a somewhat muted version of its usual activity. Consisting of seven installations that took the undocumented worker as subject, the show blended mournfulness with irony in its evocation of the danger, pain and bitterness that are the price of transgression. Michael Schnorr and Liz Sisco's replication of the Tijuana border, framed by mountains and a K mart, was filled with border guards, surveillance cameras and spectral figures trying to elude them. Berta Jottar's and Robert Sánchez's works focused on the effects of pesticides on field workers. Jottar's tribute to women who suffer miscarriages or death combined deadpan explanatory text, zip-lock bags holding dead flowers and dead women's belongings. Sánchez presented a funereal arrangement of red flowers against black backgrounds with simulated canisters of pesticides. Richard A. Lou hung sarapes as backdrops, upon and under which he arranged photos and painted skeletons, along with clothing that had actually been abandoned by people attempting a border crossing. At the center of this haunting piece was a sarape-covered coffin surrounded by votive candles and topped by framed letters from relatives in America.

The other installations of *Vidas Perdidas* turned away from death to focus on life at the border. Emily Hicks and Rocío Weiss's altar to Santa Frida (Kahlo), as protectress of artists and symbol of female power at the border, stood complete with a mannequin worshiper, a wrestler bride. The two women thus wittily redirected a popular practice to feminist ends rather than simply appropriating it. Their piece and several others drew on materials and vernacular forms evocative of the nostalgia that is an instinctive response to migration. Victor Orozco Ochoa's more detached but equally

pointed irony shone through his parody of outdated attitudes in his "Chicanosaurus," a Museum of Natural History-style skeleton standing among strewn Coors cans with a 1950s-style Chevy for a head and a split tongue marked "English only."

At the center of the gallery was Gómez-Peña's installation, displaying an eclectic array of characters from his poetry and performances. Executed by a leading black-velvet painter from Tijuana, the eight pieces included a border punk with a carrot-colored Mohawk hairdo, a border wrestler with a cartoonlike mask, a painted-face border *brujo* and an over-

dressed border yuppie complete with designer sunglasses. Underneath, Gómez-Peña had scrawled a verse that challenged any viewer's skepticism: "I borrowed this language to confess/I am the shaman in the video screen/. . . the illegal poet murdered by a ghost squad/the Tijuana wrestler reciting Mallarmé/the tropical icon in sterile Manhattan galleries/. . . I welcome your misconceptions/bienvenida tu cruel indiferencia."

Moving and coherent as *Vidas Perdidas* was, the absence of live performances by Gómez-Peña and Hicks and lack of videos by other group members

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seemed arbitrary. Earlier this season, Gómez-Peña appeared in New York City as part of Tour de Fuerza at the Dance Theater Workshop, and in "UP Tiempo" at El Museo del Barrio. Adorned with buttons, wigs and masks, he spun hilarious, scathing revisions of colonial history and current stereotypes. Switching among Spanish, English and Nahuatl, and weaving characters' stories into grand narratives of what he calls "the world's biggest floating population . . . the migrant tribe of fiery pupils," Gómez-Peña was both dynamic and self-consciously reflective. But even a muted version of BAW/TAF was a welcome reminder of the amount of creative energy at the margins, or borders, of our culture.

From July to September the group will transform San Francisco's Capp Street Gallery into an "alternative news media network by artists." They will unite California with the East Coast and with Mexico via telex, fax, radio, telephone and mail art exchanges, giving a telecommunicative spin to longstanding notions of artistic and ethnic community. □

THEATER.

MOIRA HODGSON

Measure for Measure
The Winter's Tale
Macbeth
Apart From George
The Heidi Chronicles

Mark Lamos's production of *Measure for Measure* at Lincoln Center in New York City is dark and riveting, not played for laughs. With brilliant insight, he has made Angelo a handsome, vain young man instead of the customary middle-aged martinet. In doing so, he makes sense of Angelo's relationship with his jilted fiancée, Mariana, of his passion for Isabella and of the play. The questions the production raises about justice and the law, retribution and forgiveness, are particularly fitting at a time when the Supreme Court is debating capital punishment for adolescents.

Shakespeare's Vienna is here a gray modern city, evoked by the barest props: a graffiti-covered wall (dominated by a quote from the opium eater Thomas de Quincey: "If it had not been for the law I should not have known sin"), a table and chair and a Touch-Tone telephone. Physically, the cast could have been

picked at random from any New York subway car at rush hour; their clothes run the gamut from business suits to second-hand-store fatigues.

Campbell Scott's Angelo is a sensitive young zealot with the clean-cut good looks of a cavalry officer (one you could easily imagine leading his battalion to its death to make a point). When the Duke (Len Cariou), dressed in an expensive dark suit, slams down the receiver of his phone and leaves him to take command, Angelo is nervously excited at the chance to prove himself. We've seen this sort of young man a million times before, and Scott's portrayal is a superb and complex piece of acting. Kate Burton's impressive Isabella has a toughness underneath her sweet exterior that Angelo fails to perceive; you get less a sense of her inner turmoil than of her iron determination. How naïve Angelo is, still wet behind the ears but "dress'd in a little brief authority," to think for a minute that she would exchange her virginity for her brother's life. This Isabella would have been an excellent fund-raiser for her convent — and yet when she agrees to marry the Duke at the end, it has a weird logic. We've seen her sort before, too.

Lamos emphasizes the complexities and contradictions of the leading characters with the result that his production is both disturbing and moving. (It's a far cry from the last staging I saw, on a wet afternoon in Regent's Park, where the cast in Elizabethan costume dipped in and out of the bushes, accompanied by the snap of opening and closing umbrellas.) As usual, there are as many acting styles as actors. Cariou's Duke is more convincing than his rather twinkly Friar, who seems to have wandered in from a Cagney film. Jack Weston's Pompey is a comic turn from an old detective movie; Ethyl Eichelberger's Froth is simply lame.

Despite the lack of unity in the acting, Lamos's production achieves a cohesion, because the director has a point of view that he imposes with success. On the other hand, James Lapine's *The Winter's Tale*, at the Public Theater, is aimless improvisation. The actors work in whatever style they please, and, apart from James Olson as Camillo, not one of them is capable of reciting verse.

The Winter's Tale is a far more difficult play than *Measure for Measure*, and one in which Shakespeare broke the rules. A tragedy that is transformed into a comedy, it stretches over a sixteen-year period, going from jealousy and pain to

bucolic romp and reconciliation, with no unity of time or place. Nevill Coghill called it a "dazzling piece of avant-garde work." The audience is required to respond to the story like a child, at once completely carried away and yet aware that it is, after all, only a story.

Lapine lets the company loose on this work with a blank check. The large polished wooden set is vaguely Tudor, dominated in the first act by a painting from the Italian Renaissance, and the action is framed by the antics of a commedia dell'arte Harlequin, who from time to time fishes costumes out of a box. The score by Michael Starobin (Stephen Sondheim's orchestrator) and William Finn is musical comedy; Sicilia's court is dressed in costumes from *A Christmas Carol*, while Bohemia is all Regency ruffles.

The acting too is an anthology. Alternately pursing his lips and gazing into space or squeezing his eyes shut to convey hysteria, Mandy Patinkin's neurotic Leontes belongs on a psychiatrist's couch on the Upper West Side rather than on the throne of Sicilia. Hermione (Diane Venora) has listened to his kvetching a thousand times, and she doesn't take it very seriously. Christopher Reeve is, as Proust said of sole, all profile, and he delivers his lines out of the corner of his mouth with occasional flicks of the tongue for emphasis. Alfre Woodard's Paulina is peculiar to look at (she wears a wig of exaggerated dreadlocks) but she has a do-or-die energy that keeps things moving, even though she hacks Shakespeare's verse to bits. Rocco Sisto's Autolycus is briefly funny when he pretends to be a courtier, but he slides into vulgarity.

To see a group of actors who recognized that the play they were each appearing in was one and the same, I had to go down to Grand Street, on the Lower East Side. At the Harry De Jur Playhouse, the Education Department troupe of the Royal National Theatre gives a pared-down two-hour version of *Macbeth* without intermission. Aided only by benches and glasses of water, the performers, in ragged generic costumes, remain onstage throughout. Eight actors take on twenty-seven roles, approaching the play as though it were an epic poem. It was like seeing *Macbeth* from a speeding train. This is a shoestring production — having actors double and triple in roles is unsettling, and baffling for those who don't know the play, but for the poetry of it, no other Shakespeare production in town comes close.

A typographical error in the program notes quotes Kenneth Tynan as calling Macbeth a "concerned thug." In fact, he called him a "cornered thug" who ends up "lacking even a death scene with which to regain lost stature." Ken Drury, like Olivier in the role before him, begins in a low key, guilty before the curtain rises (he has already killed Duncan), and builds the part from there.

Macbeth was directed by Nick Ward, who at only 26 also wrote and directed *Apart From George*, a five-character play set in a remote Fen village. This production—again without benefit of props—was notable for the quality of the acting. Alan Bennion, with his gravelly Old Vic voice, doubled as a vicar who conceals his despair over cheery cups of tea, and an elderly landowner whose passions are swimming perilously close to the surface. So convincing was he that, even without a change of costume, it was hard to believe that there were not two of him.

The sorry state of Broadway this year was summed up by the Pulitzer Prize, awarded to Wendy Wasserstein for a successful bad play called *The Heidi Chronicles*, which moved to the Plymouth Theater from Off Broadway. It is hard to write about women, the 1960s, gays, yuppies and single motherhood without slipping into cliché, and Wasserstein can't help it. It's a harmless play, perfect for Broadway since there is nothing in it to offend deeply or shake up the house, but just enough to make the audience feel knowing. (It's also overlong, enough to induce slight boredom so that those in their seats will feel they've been exposed to art.) Despite some good moments and clever ruses the evening drags.

Joan Allen as Heidi, whose odyssey we follow, is without interest, except when she is lecturing on women in art (the best part of the play, apart from a predictable but very funny encounter on a TV talk show). The men in her life are a teen-age boyfriend who turns out to be gay and a man who marries someone else because he wants a woman to look after him while he climbs the career ladder. (As Scoop Rosenbaum, who publishes a yuppie magazine called *Boomer*, cheats on his wife, then goes into politics, Peter Friedman has the best-written part and gives the best performance.)

For the most part the dialogue in *Heidi* is labored and irritating, lacking any real wit. The most moving insight comes when Heidi, who feels betrayed by the women's movement, says, "I was a true be-

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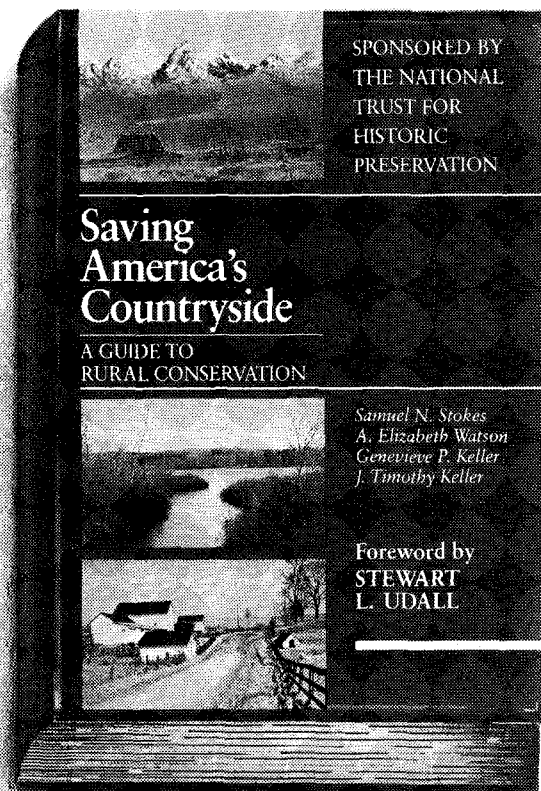
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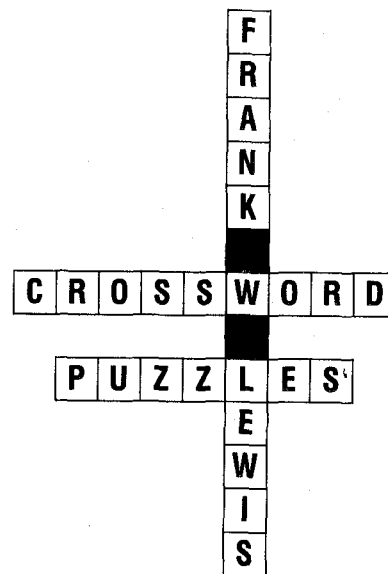
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liever who didn't understand it was just a phase." Indeed, many women who were part of the movement in the 1960s feel stranded in the 1980s. So what does Heidi do? She adopts a baby. The snatches of 1960s rock—the Rolling Stones, Janis Joplin, Bob Dylan—that bridge the scenes in this play are the best thing about it, but they only briefly rouse the audience from its torpor. □

EXCHANGE.

(Continued From Page 578)

G.M.H.C.'s 75,000 financial supporters are not gay; many of them are making a donation to an AIDS or gay organization for the first time. Rist's assumption that people are making choices between AIDS and other gay causes is simply incorrect.

Finally, nowhere in his piece does Rist explain what G.M.H.C. does with its \$11 million budget, or why an organization like G.M.H.C. has an \$11 million budget. Eighty percent is raised privately for the simple reason that while government funding has expanded for AIDS services and education, it has not kept pace with the epidemic. There have been over 18,000 people with AIDS in New York City to date. G.M.H.C. has provided services—legal, financial, recreational, emotional support—to 45 percent of these people. Currently, we have 2,400 clients. All these numbers represent human beings, each with a need for our services that is real. We are barely keeping up with the demand, but we don't turn people away.

I'd also like to correct a couple of the statements made by Albert Cunningham in his response to Rist in the March 20 *Nation*. G.M.H.C. has never received a dollar of minority-targeted funding. In fact, through our coalition efforts on the city and state level, we have helped raise the level of funding for organizations based in the black and Latino communities. For example, in 1988 the New York State Legislature responded to G.M.H.C.'s lobbying efforts by adding \$11.2 million to the state's AIDS budget, of which G.M.H.C. received \$250,000. The remaining \$10.95 million went to black and Latino organizations, family planning groups, community-based clinics and so on.

While there have no doubt been instances of staff or volunteer insensitivity toward clients, the contention that G.M.H.C.'s 800 clients of color are routinely treated with "amazing rudeness and condescension" is ridiculous. Staff and volunteers alike are trained to treat clients with dignity and respect—routinely. It should be pointed out that G.M.H.C.'s attempts to diversify its personnel have resulted in a staff of which 50 percent are not white, gay men.

G.M.H.C. and other AIDS service organizations are not doing all the work of the gay

community—there's no argument about that. But we consider ourselves part of the gay and lesbian community and part of the fight for gay and lesbian liberation. Dividing the gay community, or the broader community, into the "threatened" and the "unthreatened" weakens all of us.

Timothy J. Sweeney is the deputy executive director for policy of the Gay Men's Health Crisis.

BRETT AVERILL

It is gratifying to see an article that finally puts acquired immune deficiency syndrome into its appropriate frame of reference as a terrible human tragedy, the implications of which shrink beside the outrageous claims that typically are made by AIDS activists. In the context of history, this is a small epidemic, with deaths felling not millions per year but thousands per decade. If medical researchers continue solving its mysteries at the furious pace of the last few years, we can still hope that it will prove, in the large view, to be sociologically insignificant as well. In the meantime, however, this bewildering little catastrophe remains painful indeed for those at its various epicenters. Some go numb; some cry out in anguish; a few inflict on others the hatred that has been visited on them, meanwhile hastening to reassure themselves that bitter words and actions sometimes are warranted "because we are *dying*." Has the response to "the wasting disease" been similar among tribespeople of the Congo? I doubt it. Unlike their fellow afflicted among the ranks of white America, they were never acculturated to believe that the world would change its orbit to suit their whim.

The political battle against AIDS is important, and it demands ever newer, more radical, more imaginative strategies, but it need not consume an entire subculture. Too frequently the new AIDS activists enter the debate with the assumption that their issue must be the pre-eminent issue, that those who decline participation in "die-ins" must be suffering a ghoulis death wish. Suggestions to the contrary evoke a pained protest: "We're trying to save lives." But their broader life-affirming avowals would be easier to take seriously if more of them had been active on behalf of the common good before the onset of a disaster that at first beset only their own limited sphere; if more of them were to reach across oceans and cultural boundaries to others similarly afflicted. Instead, they betray a baffling blindness to the larger picture: economic Darwinism, the United States' shameful public policy of abandoning those most in need. When they address this point at all, it is to request fiscal relief and anti-discrimination policies solely for those stricken by this specific medical condition.

The political wing of gay America has lost its former global view of the freeing of the human spirit as a prerequisite for the breaking of everyday constraints. Darrell Yates

Rist is right: Ours is no longer a liberation movement. *Fag Rag* has been supplanted by *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. There are those among us who keep a running tally ("My friend Steve, he was number thirty-seven") of the dead and dying in their circle of acquaintances. I know of a man who actually accepted from a social service organization the accolade of "Honorary Person with AIDS."

This is a rending period for those of us who have had to watch our dearest friends sicken and expire. Inevitably, I worry for my lover, who remains in perfect health; I see the anguish on his face when I am seized by a sudden dry cough. There is nothing I want more than a long life with this man I love, but life must be more than the antithesis of death. Each of us will choose his own path. But I grieve for those of my brethren whose spirits, if not their bodies, must be added to the list of casualties of an amorphous epidemic.

Brett Averill, a freelance journalist, was formerly editor of the New York Native.

ROBERT MASSA

I sat in a jail cell with Darrell Yates Rist during a civil disobedience act protesting the Supreme Court's *Hardwick* decision. I too believe that there are other gay issues besides AIDS. But Rist's argument that the disaster of the epidemic has been exaggerated and drains energy from other battles is bad medicine, bad politics, and boils down to blaming the victims.

Rist claims the San Francisco study suggesting that nearly all HIV-infected people progress to AIDS is unrepresentative, yet he fails to mention that numerous other studies of infected people in all risk groups here and abroad reported similar findings at the International AIDS Conference in Stockholm last June. No study has disputed these findings, including the "more hopeful" one Rist cites. Are we to take solace that 20 to 25 percent of infected people in that study are healthy after ten years? What about the 75 to 80 percent who are sick or dead?

Rist likewise plays fast with the estimates of how many are infected, arguing these are inflated because of "mythical assumptions about the population size" of gay men. These assumptions are the very Kinsey statistics he himself uses two paragraphs later to calculate the number of uninfected gay men.

It may be sentimental to argue that AIDS has brought maturity to the gay movement, but surely it has brought increased political activism. Rather than narrow our focus, AIDS has raised consciousness about gut issues like access to health care and the rights of surviving lovers. Why complain that the community donates to Gay Men's Health Crisis when even Reagan's own task force conceded that support services are woefully underfunded? Why sow discord by claiming

lesbian issues have suffered when examples abound that the epidemic has deepened the bonds between gay men and women? Why argue that we've neglected gay youth—what greater legacy than that we stood up firmly against calamity?

And even if AIDS had distracted from other battles, so what? Infectious disease is a more urgent issue than gay rights. What do civil rights mean in the grave?

Rist is right that we must strive for a high quality of life and struggle against the seduction of apocalyptic visions. Yet he himself concludes with dangerous metaphorical thinking: that it is not the virus or even bigotry that is destroying us but our own "dark belief that we deserve it."

Finally, Rist fails to report on recent advances in measuring immune system decline among asymptomatic infected people and on the advantages of early intervention with prophylaxis and low-dose antivirals. Even the sluggish Food and Drug Administration has recognized that these offer our best hope to save lives. We need to encourage people at risk to learn their status and actively fight the virus, not to cloud these difficult decisions with false hope and skewed polemics.

AIDS is already a disaster, and there is every reason to believe it will get far worse. Only with aggressive research, early treatment and better legal, financial and psychological support can we stem the tide. We don't have time for wishful thinking and self-incrimination. Time is what we don't have.

Robert Massa writes extensively on AIDS and gay rights for The Village Voice and other publications.

MICHAEL CALLEN

Thank you for publishing Darrell Yates Rist's brilliant polemic. His challenge to the insidiously seductive apocalyptic view of AIDS is much needed. As a gay man who has been battling AIDS for six and a half years, I believe I'm in a position to say that the struggle to end AIDS must not eclipse our commitment to the struggle for lesbian and gay civil rights. Rist's article is a brilliant reminder of that point.

My only objection is to the several derogatory references to "Kramer's crowd." By any analysis, Larry Kramer is a hero—perhaps the hero—of the gay community's response to AIDS. I bristled at the implication that he's part of the problem. Kramer, like Rist, is part of the solution.

As Larry Kramer correctly asserts, AIDS is gay men's holocaust and must be resisted with every ounce of energy we have. At the same time, we must never forget (to draw on the wisdom of survivors of another Holocaust) that the passive genocide that has characterized the Federal government's response to AIDS is grounded in society's devaluation of the worth of our lives simply because of who and how we love.

EVENTS.

THE MYTH OF THE DANGEROUS MOTHER

Jessica Benjamin, author of *The Bonds of Love*.

FRIDAY, MAY 5, 7:30 PM

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Jacek Czaputowicz is a founding member of Freedom and Peace, an independent peace and ecology movement in Poland. He is an editor of *Future Times* magazine and a member of Lech Walesa's Citizens' Committee. Elzbieta Piwowarska studies sociology in Krakow, where she has participated in recent student demonstrations. She has been an active member of Freedom and Peace and now works with *Future Times*.

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CLASSIFIED.

AIDS first struck the small subset of highly promiscuous, urban gay men who could afford Fire Island and the fast lane—a group as notorious for its disdain of gay politics as for its discretionary income. When Kramer first sounded the alarm he complained bitterly that if the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force had only done what it was chartered to do, there wouldn't have been a need to create new organizations such as the Gay Men's Health Crisis. But what wasn't acknowledged at the time was that most of the "clones" who founded—and who continue to dominate—G.M.H.C. had never supported N.G.L.T.F.—politically or financially. Most had probably never heard of it. One wonders how many gay men who regularly write out a check to G.M.H.C. also support N.G.L.T.F., the Hetrick-Martin Institute or the many other deserving organizations so desperate for funds.

In the early years of the epidemic, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force had to huff and puff and posture before Congress, pretending to be a powerful organization representing a well-organized and sizable constituency. The task force's tireless leader, Ginny Apuzzo (another unsung heroine of both the AIDS and the lesbian and gay movements), somehow managed to avoid the embarrassing revelation that the largest lesbian and gay civil rights organization—in a country with an estimated 10 million to 20 million gay men and lesbians—actually had a paltry membership of around 8,000. (I always chuckle when the rabid right mutters about a powerful homosexual lobby that controls the Federal response to AIDS.)

By and large, the leaders of the AIDS movement have not had histories of activism. (This has sometimes been an asset and sometimes a liability.) Many apolitical gay men, having come face to face with death-dealing prejudice, have been politicized by AIDS. It is my hope that they will recognize the interrelatedness of most oppression and work for liberation on multiple fronts.

The solution to the problem Rist so forcefully articulates is not to reduce the level of commitment to the struggle to end AIDS but rather to match that level of commitment in regard to equally pressing issues confronting lesbians and gay men. So, take out your checkbooks this instant and support any (or all!) of the excellent organizations mentioned in Rist's article.

Michael Callen is a founding member of the People With AIDS Coalition.

AUTHOR'S QUERY

For a biography of the Italian-born photographer Tina Modotti (1896-1942) and a *catalogue raisonné* of her work, I would appreciate hearing from anyone who has photographs by her or letters, documents or reminiscences by or about her. S.M. Lowe
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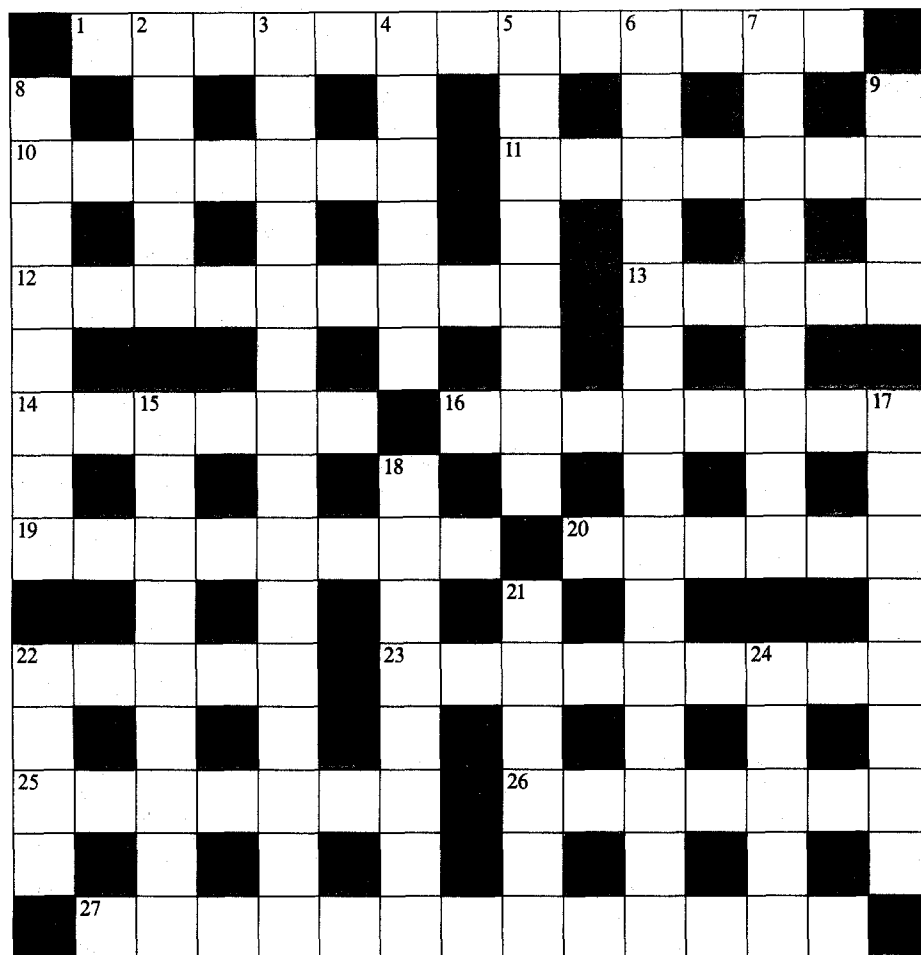
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- 1 A close baseball contest? (7,6)
- 10 With direct current, they don't appear on the bill, as one meets things head-on. (7)
- 11 A singular form of work clothes, obviously superior. (7)
- 12 Parker might be doing it to the wheels in San Francisco, preparing for bed. (7,2)
- 13 The stress of strict usage—especially in poetry. (5)
- 14 Proving you get ahead—but slowly—in Korea. (6)
- 16 One way to intimidate, having errors—real bloomers! (8)
- 19 Acted collectively and criminally—both the working group and a sort of dupe. (6,2)
- 20 Thus in return, the two of us proceed in New York. (6)
- 22 and 25 Fundamental language—not only with computers! (5,7)
- 23 In return, a crustacean should have a part of it—as the boatman might sing. (9)
- 25 See 22 across
- 26 When displayed by a camel, anger is obviously a mixed-up affair. (7)
- 27 They might be prepared to take on a Second Mate, if it wasn't smooth sailing the first time. (5,8)

DOWN

- 2 Where one wouldn't expect to find good breeding, to become liable to something. (5)

- 3 There's money in the potato products a person has! One might, with several good pots to show for it! (4,2,4,5)
- 4 Flag officer? (He has a long way to go to be one.) (6)
- 5 In a manner of speaking, there seems to be some question about the creature's present ability! (5,3)
- 6 It's that initial drink which is important as a seasonal sign! (3,5,7)
- 7 Most stupid, at any rate! (9)
- 8 and 9 Very cheap drink in the old days of England—around some women, especially. (12)
- 15 A sort of cause rang out with this—and, Oh! How sweet it is! (4,5)
- 17 In one form, heaved in something like "Rosebud," if you remember? That's what I often did, with the snow and everything! (8)
- 18 Evidently a stupid movie—made before the talkies, obviously. (4,4)
- 21 The painting surface—or the engine—might have to be like little Edward, when affectedly nice. (6)
- 22 You might get one where they sell 9 down. (4)
- 24 They sometimes advertised a used car as having one. (5)

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TIME FOR JEWISH AMERICANS TO SHAPE A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL

We are Americans and Jews and we come together at this time publicly to express our strong desire to see the United States take meaningful steps to dissociate our country from the policies of Israel and to support mutual recognition between Israel and the new State of Palestine proclaimed last November by the Palestine National Council.

For some years we have witnessed Israel increasingly deviating from political policies that we find acceptable and from moral values that we hold dear. These developments are not the responsibility of any particular political party in Israel but rather stem, in our judgement, from a tragically misguided approach toward the Arab world in which Israel is located, a racialist ideology and a growing militancy. We can no longer condone or be associated with such Israeli behavior, nor, do we believe, should our country.

In recent years Israel has twisted away from basic commitments made at Camp David in 1978; annexed further territories, including East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, while continuing to expand settlements in all the occupied territories; and grotesquely invaded Lebanon, resulting in the death of tens of thousands of Lebanese and Palestinians as well as hundreds of Israelis and Americans, and the taking as hostages of others.

Furthermore, Israeli policies and attitudes toward the Palestinian people have made it evident that only major changes in Israel's basic posture will allow for a peaceful political settlement with the Palestinians.

Israeli complicity in Irangate and Contragate coupled with Israel's employment of American Jews as spies against our country further underscore the growing dangers inherent in the current U.S.-Israeli relationship. The close identification in the public mind between Israel and Jews – an equation vigorously fostered by both the Zionist movement and the American Jewish lobby, which has come under its control – threatens to stigmatize Jews everywhere.

The recent acts of killings, beatings, curfews, expulsions and house arrests – all against unarmed Palestinians living in areas Israel has occupied for 21 years – further demonstrate that Israel has become a badly divided country with many unfortunate similarities to the situation that prevails in South Africa.

Our ancestors came to the United States because, as a result of their Jewishness, they were discriminated against and abused. The European experience culminated in the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust. How tragic that in our own time the very State established by Jews in the aftermath of this evil has become a place where racialism, religious discrimination, militarism and injustice prevail; and that Israel itself has become a pariah state within the world community. Events taking place today are all too reminiscent of the pogroms from which our own forefathers

fled two and three generations ago – but this time those in authority are Jews and the victims are Moslem and Christian Palestinians.

We believe that Israel's course could not be maintained but for the continuing financial, political, military and covert support of the U.S. government. And we fear that unless firm steps of disengagement from Israel are taken now our country might get dragged into a major war for which preparations are under way.

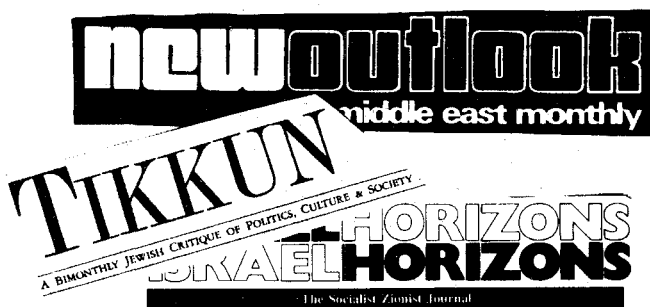
In addition, we believe that unless the United States takes serious steps to distance itself from Israel the Israelis will mistakenly continue to think that the course they are on is acceptable to the American people.

For all these reasons we believe the time has come to **normalize** the U.S. relationship with Israel. A complete re-evaluation of what has become since 1967 the American sponsorship of Israel is required. The unprecedented amounts of economic aid should be cut back over the next two to three years to much smaller levels. Furthermore, the considerable military and intelligence assistance should also be radically reduced.

Unfortunately, in recent years much the opposite course has been followed, and Israel has practically become a ward of the United States. We urge an urgent and open debate about the serious problems and dangers which have resulted from the current structure of U.S.-Israeli relations. Few foreign policy issues are of such importance to our country. Consequently, we urge everyone, including our elected public officials, to resist the widespread inhibitions from speaking up about Israel, inhibitions which result from the severe financial, political and ideological pressures often brought to bear against those who do.

We further believe that the time is overdue for negotiations between the Israeli government and the PLO, which is quite clearly the chosen representative for the great majority of Palestinians – negotiations that should quickly lead to full recognition of the Palestinian State in today's occupied territories and reasonable security guarantees for all parties. In the security guarantees we think our country should participate; but no longer in the financing and supporting of the kinds of policies Israel has been pursuing. The continual oppression and denial of Palestinians of their right to self-determination is an injustice which has become intolerable not only to those demonstrating for their freedom in Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza and throughout Israel itself.

The citizens of Israel, of course, will ultimately choose their own country's destiny. But at the very least the citizens of the United States should stop financing and supporting policies that are contrary to the principles and values we hold precious as Americans and Jews.



What Do These Jewish Publications Not Want You To Know?*

* The only publications to refuse to publish our JCOME Statement of principles as a paid ad are these "liberal" and "progressive" Jewish and Israeli magazines.

For details and information on the upcoming JCOME National Phone Teach-in call (202) 362-5266 at any hour.

Already endorsed by over 1200 American Jews including Jewish professors at 110 universities, this Statement has appeared in *The Nation*, *The New York Review*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Progressive*, *L.A. Weekly*, *The Congressional Record*, and other newspapers.

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